

INSPECTION REPORT

**Ivy Bank School
Macclesfield**

LEA area : Cheshire

Unique Reference Number : 111022

Headteacher : Mrs Joy Wilson

Reporting Inspector : Dr Melvyn J Bradshaw
6169

Dates of inspection : 29th November to 3rd December 1999

Under OFSTED contract number: 707038
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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school :	Infant and Junior
Type of control :	County
Age range of pupils :	4 to 11 years
Gender of pupils :	Mixed
School address :	Valley Road Macclesfield Cheshire SK11 8PB
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Appropriate authority :	Governing Body
Name of Chair of Governors :	Mr Neil Boardman
Date of previous inspection :	March 1996

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Mr Richard Barnard, Lay Inspector		Attendance Support, guidance and pupils? welfare Partnership with parents and the community Efficiency of the school
Mr Mike Wehrmeyer, Team Inspector	English (support) Art Design and technology Special educational needs	
Mr Brian Espiner, Team Inspector	Mathematics Physical education Equal opportunities	Curriculum and assessment
Mr Eric Wilson, Team Inspector	Mathematics (support) Science Information technology	Pupils? spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
Mrs Sylvia Gatehouse, Team Inspector	Religious education Music Special educational needs (support)	Leadership and management
Dr Tom Allen, Team Inspector	Geography History	Attitudes, behaviour and personal development

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MAIN FINDINGS

What the school does well

- C. The Headteacher provides excellent leadership and a clear educational direction. She is well supported by the Governing Body and senior management team.
- C. Children make very good progress during their time in the school and achieve high standards.
- C. The teaching is usually good and very good in a third of lessons.
- C. Pupils in the special educational needs unit are very well taught and make very good progress.
- C. Pupils behave well and have very good attitudes to their work.
- C. The personal development of pupils is very effectively promoted.
- C. The school provides a good curriculum and assessment of pupils? work is very good.
- C. The support and guidance provided for pupils are very good.
- C. Links with parents, including information provided, are good.
- C. The school provides very good value for money.

Where the school has weaknesses

- I. The school has no major weaknesses.
- Minor weaknesses that need to be considered are:
- II. Boys? lower attainment in English, especially in reading and writing.
 - III. The development of outdoor facilities for children under five.
 - IV. The need to develop long-term financial planning.
 - V. Continuing the development of the role of co-ordinators.
 - VI. Extending opportunities for pupils? independent work, especially in science and library use.

This is a very good school. The strengths of the school significantly outweigh its weaknesses; these will form the basis of the governors? action plan, which will be sent to all parents or guardians of pupils at the school.

How the school has improved since the last inspection

The school has made very good progress since the previous inspection. The school has maintained the high standards of achievement and the quality of teaching has improved further. The time allocation for pupils in Key Stage 2 is in line with the recommended figure and the time allocated to each subject is checked consistently. Good schemes of work have been developed. These have helped to improve the quality of teaching and provision in all subjects. Standards in information technology have improved and are now above average; the teaching of the subject is also good. Investigative aspects of mathematics and design and technology have improved well, but more progress needs to be made in science. The role of the curriculum co-ordinators has developed well and further progress in this area is planned. There is a satisfactory link between financial planning and the school development plan. Financial control is now good. Effective use is made of pupils? individual education plans. The school is very well placed to maintain the present high standards and improve further.

Standards in subjects

The table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds in 1999 based on the National Curriculum tests:

Performance in	Compared with all schools	Compared with similar schools
English	A	A
Mathematics	A	A
Science	B	B

The results refer to pupils in mainstream classes only. The information shows that standards in English and mathematics are well above the national average and the results of similar schools. The results in science are above the national average and the results of similar schools. Standards are not quite as high this year, but are above average in English and mathematics. In information technology attainment is above the levels expected and in religious education they are above the expectations of the Agreed Syllabus.

By the age of seven, pupils' attainment is similar to the national average in reading, writing, mathematics and science. Attainment is high in information technology and religious education. Pupils make very good progress during their time in the school. Although pupils who are in the unit for moderate learning difficulties display attainment that is well below average, they make very good progress owing to outstanding teaching.

Quality of teaching

Teaching in:	Under 5	5 - 7 years	7 ? 11 years
English	Good	Very Good	Good
Mathematics	Good	Good	Good
Science		Good	Good
Information technology		Good	Good
Religious education		Good	Good
Other subjects	Good	Good	Good

The quality of teaching throughout the school is consistently good. Over a third of teaching is very good or better and more than three-quarters good or better. It is rarely less than satisfactory. The quality of teaching in the special educational needs unit is of a particularly high standard.

Throughout the school most subjects are well taught, except for physical education where teaching is satisfactory.

Inspectors make judgements about teaching in the range: excellent; very good; good; satisfactory; unsatisfactory; poor; very poor. 'Satisfactory' means that strengths outweigh any weaknesses.

Other aspects of the school

Aspect	Comment
Behaviour	The high standards of behaviour and discipline have a positive effect on the standards of attainment. Pupils are well behaved, courteous and show consideration for others.
Attendance	Attendance is very good and well above the national average. There is very little lateness and lessons start very promptly.
Ethos*	The school has a very good ethos. Pupils demonstrate very good attitudes to their learning, relationships are very good and there is a commitment to improving standards further.
Leadership and management	The Headteacher provides the school with excellent leadership. She provides a clear educational direction and is very well supported by the senior management team and Governing Body.
Curriculum	The curriculum is broadly based and well balanced; it meets the needs of pupils effectively. Children's work is assessed very well. Planning is particularly effective, and is made easier by the good use of assessment results.
Pupils with special educational needs	Provision for pupils with special educational needs, including those in the unit, is very good. It enables these pupils to make very good progress.
Spiritual, moral, social & cultural development	The school has maintained the high standards identified in the previous report. Very good provision is made for pupils' moral, social and cultural development, and that for spiritual development is good.
Staffing, resources and accommodation	Staffing levels are good and teaching and learning support staff work well together. Accommodation and learning resources are satisfactory.
Value for money	The school provides very good value for money. Pupils make very good progress overall because of very well organised support and high quality

	teaching. Financial planning is good in the short-term, but longer term planning is insufficiently detailed.
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* *Ethos is the climate for learning: attitudes to work, relationships and the commitment to high standards.*

The parents' views of the school

What most parents like about the school	What some parents are not happy about
VII. The school encourages parents to play an active part in its life. VIII. The school is approachable. IX. They are kept well informed about what is to be taught and their children's progress. X. Pupils' attainment is generally good. XI. Children's attitudes and values are well promoted. XII. Behaviour is of a high standard. XIII. Children like school.	Parents e some comm behaviour a curriculum v

Inspectors' judgements support parents' positive views. The school is approachable and parents are encouraged to become fully involved. The school makes good efforts to inform all parents about the curriculum and pupils' written reports are good. Pupils make very good progress during their time in the school. Positive attitudes and values are promoted and children like school. The school makes good efforts to treat all cases of misbehaviour consistently, although there are occasional differences between classes.

KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION

There are no key issues for the school to address but, in the context of its many strengths, the following minor points for improvement should be considered as the basis for an action plan:

- XV. The relative lower attainment of boys in English, especially reading and writing. The school has identified this area and is monitoring boys' progress and possible factors already. (Paragraphs 77, 78, 81)
- XVI. The need to improve outdoor facilities for children under five. (Paragraphs 61, 76)
- XVII. The development of long-term financial planning. (Paragraph 63)
- XVIII. Continuing the development of the role of the subject managers, including links with the Governing Body. (Paragraph 55)
- XIX. Extending opportunities for pupils' independent work, especially in science and the use of the library. (Paragraphs 13, 81, 88, 98, 100, 101, 105)

INTRODUCTION

Characteristics of the school

1. Ivy Bank Primary School is situated on the southern outskirts of Macclesfield, Cheshire. Pupils come from the ward in which the school is situated, although most are from two other adjacent wards. Pupils come from both owner-occupied and rented accommodation, the proportion from the latter group having increased since the previous inspection. The school is above the average size for a primary school. Currently, there are 370 full-time pupils from Reception to Year 6. A little under 52 per cent of pupils are boys. Almost all pupils (98 per cent) are of white ethnic origin. There are five pupils (1.3 per cent) for whom English is an additional language; this figure is a little above most schools. A little over eight per cent of pupils are eligible for, and claim, free school meals, a figure which is below the national average. However, there is accumulating evidence that this figure does not reflect the true level of need. Overall, the socio-economic background of pupils is a little below average.
2. The school is organised into 15 classes, two each for Reception and Years 1 to 6, together with a unit for pupils with moderate learning difficulties. This unit is for Key Stage 2 pupils who come to the school from a wide area of south and east Cheshire. Children enter the Reception classes full-time in the September of the year in which they are five. The majority of children have previously attended the playgroup situated on the site of the school; few have attended Nursery. At the time of the inspection 35 of the 47 children in Reception were under five. All children in Reception follow a timetable which identifies National Curriculum subjects, although planning is appropriately based on the recommended areas of learning for children under five. Fifteen pupils have local education authority Statements of Special Educational Needs. This figure includes 12 pupils in the special educational needs unit. Altogether, 44 pupils (12 per cent) have been identified as having learning difficulties at Stages 1 to 5 of the Code of Practice, below the national average. Baseline assessment data show that attainment on entry into Reception is broad, but below average overall, and is particularly low in language and literacy.
3. The school has clear aims; these indicate that the school exists to provide a broad and balanced education, to ensure children are valued and respected, and to provide skilled and motivated staff with a strong partnership between home, school and community. The previous inspection took place in March, 1996. The key issues of the previous report have been addressed well. The school development plan identifies wide-ranging targets relating mainly to literacy, numeracy and science. In addition, aspects of information technology, history, geography, art, design and technology, physical education and religious education are included. The school also aims to improve teaching and learning, and the accommodation, further.
4. Throughout the report, data for Key Stage 2 relate only to pupils in the mainstream classes. Where relevant, reference is made separately to the attainment and progress of pupils in the special educational needs unit. This ensures that a fairer comparison is made of the school's results, since in 1999 11 per cent of Year 6 pupils were from the unit, and in 1998 the figure was 14 per cent.

Key Indicators

Attainment at Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1

		Year	Boys	Girls	Total
National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics	
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	23 (24)	26 (22)	22 (27)	
	Girls	21 (15)	21 (15)	20 (13)	
	Total	44 (39)	47 (37)	42 (40)	
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	88 (76)	94 (73)	84 (78)	
	National	82 (80)	83 (81)	87 (84)	

Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	25 (25)	27 (27)	27 (24)
	Girls	21 (15)	21 (14)	21 (12)
	Total	46 (40)	48 (41)	48 (36)
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	92 (78)	96 (80)	96 (71)
	National	82 (81)	86 (85)	87 (86)

Attainment at Key Stage 2¹

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for latest reporting year:

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
1999	24 (17)	31 (24)	55 (41)

National Curriculum Test Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	17 (14)	23 (11)	21 (13)
	Girls	30 (17)	26 (17)	29 (20)
	Total	47 (31)	49 (28)	50 (33)
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	85 (76)	89 (68)	91 (80)
	National	70 (65)	69 (59)	78 (69)

Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	18 (11)	22 (12)	18 (14)
	Girls	25 (21)	26 (18)	28 (18)
	Total	43 (32)	48 (30)	46 (32)
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	78 (78)	87 (73)	84 (78)
	National	68 (65)	70 (65)	75 (68)

*The data in the Key Stage 2 table is for mainstream pupils only; it omits Year 6 pupils taught in the special educational needs unit (6 in 1999, 7 in 1998)

Attendance

Percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year

		%
Authorised Absence	School	3.0
	National comparative data	5.7
Unauthorised Absence	School	0.1
	National comparative data	0.5

Exclusions

Number of exclusions of pupils (of statutory school age) during the previous year:

	Number
Fixed period	1
Permanent	0

¹

Percentages in parentheses refer to the year before the latest reporting year

Quality of teaching

Percentage of teaching observed which is :

	%
Very good or better	34.1
Satisfactory or better	99.3
Less than satisfactory	0.7

PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS AT THE SCHOOL

Attainment and progress

1. In 1999, in National Curriculum tests, at the end of Key Stage 2, the proportion of pupils achieving the expected Level 4 or above was well above the national average in English and mathematics, and above the average in science. Similarly, the proportion of pupils achieving the higher Level 5 was well above the average in English and mathematics and above average in science. Overall, the results were well above the national average in English and mathematics, and above average in science. In comparison with similar schools, results in English and mathematics were well above the average, and in science they were above the average. The figures represented an improvement over the results of 1998. Since the last inspection, although there have been some fluctuations, the school has maintained its good results.
2. In 1999, in National Curriculum tests, at the end of Key Stage 1, the proportion of pupils achieving the expected Level 2 or above was well above the national average in writing, above the average in reading but below the average in mathematics. Similarly, the proportion achieving the higher Level 3 was above the average in writing and mathematics, and broadly average in reading. Overall, the results were above the national average in writing, and similar to the average in reading and mathematics. In comparison with similar schools, results in writing were above the average, and in reading and mathematics they were similar the average. Teacher assessments in science indicated that 96 per cent of pupils achieved at least Level 2, above the national average, and 22 per cent pupils were recorded as attaining Level 3, also above the average.
3. The previous report indicated that, throughout the school, standards were too low in information technology. This weakness has been rectified and attainment is now consistently above average. Investigative skills, which were not used well, especially in mathematics, science and design and technology, have improved. The improvement is most marked in mathematics and design and technology.
4. During their time in the school, pupils make very good progress. They enter Reception with attainment that is generally below average and leave Year 6 with standards that are above average. This progress is related to the consistent, high quality teaching in both key stages and for children under five.
5. Baseline assessments, completed shortly after children join Reception, indicate that their attainment on entry in mathematics is below average, and for language and literacy it is even lower. In other areas of learning attainment on entry is closer to average, especially in the areas of creative and physical development. They make good progress during their time in Reception and the majority achieve the expected attainment by the age of five in all areas of learning, except for language and literacy where it is lower. Progress in language development is good. Children listen particularly well. They know that print carries meaning. By the age of five they tell a story from pictures and a few read simple text accurately. Many children write their own name by five and are beginning to form their letters correctly, copying the printing of an adult well. Progress in the mathematical area of learning is good. Children know numbers to ten and mathematical terms such as longer and shorter. A few add one to another number correctly and most count accurately up to five, or beyond for higher attainers. The rate of progress in pupils' knowledge and understanding of the world is good. This is evident in their knowledge that life differs in a hot country, such as Kenya, from that in Britain. They sequence the events leading up to Christmas correctly. They know the names of the 'Three Wise Men' and that Herod wanted to kill Jesus. Progress in the creative area of learning is satisfactory, children use paint well, build objects using construction materials and know that musical sounds can be high or low. Progress in physical development is satisfactory. Skills associated with painting, drawing, cutting and writing develop well. During physical activities children demonstrate good control, but there are too few opportunities during the week to develop this area.

6. By the age of seven, at the end of Key Stage 1, attainment is average overall. In English pupils read well, and write using punctuation such as capital letters and full stops correctly. Pupils are beginning to write with a joined script, but few by the end of Year 2 use it consistently. Most write neatly, with letters formed accurately and of similar size. Pupils listen well and speak clearly. Pupils' mathematical knowledge is about average in all areas, including number and mental arithmetic. They use their knowledge well in tackling problems. Pupils' knowledge and skills in science are broadly average. In information technology, attainment is above average, pupils use the mouse and keyboard with good skill to input, save and print text. Pupils' attainment in religious education is above that expected in the Locally Agreed Syllabus. They have a good vocabulary, retell stories from the New Testament and know some of the key features of Islam.
7. During Key Stage 1, in the core subjects of English, information technology and religious education, pupils make good progress, building well on the knowledge and skills developed in Reception. This good progress is associated with good use of language across much of the curriculum and well planned activities. The introduction of the literacy hour and increased emphasis on developing spelling strategies have also assisted progress in English. Progress in mathematics and science is satisfactory. Progress is good in art, design and technology and geography. The work on puppets promotes both artistic and design skills, as well as extending pupils' cultural knowledge. In geography, pupils use maps well and know about features of the local area. In other subjects, progress is satisfactory. In history, pupils know about famous people, such as Florence Nightingale, and appreciate that there are differences between then and now. In music, singing lacks attention to detail and in physical education pupils do not exercise enough.
8. Although last year's results were well above average, pupils' attainment when they leave the school at the age of eleven this year will not be as high. This is mainly linked to the large number of young pupils in the current Year 6; almost 40 per cent were born in July or August. Pupils write at length in a range of styles and for different purposes, with particularly good use of adjectives and correct use of punctuation. They identify some of the features of poems and discuss well how the style of one poet differs from another. Pupils' handwriting is consistently neat and joined. They read well and are articulate, although there is a tendency to rush when speaking out loud. Pupils generally know how to use a library and reference books, but the development of this area is limited owing to the problems of library access. Pupils' mathematical knowledge is above average overall because, although about a quarter is not likely to attain Level 4, about half the remaining pupils are on track to achieve Level 5. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of science are average or a little above, due to interesting, well organised, teacher-led activities. Pupils' scientific skills are not as well developed as their knowledge, as there is too little emphasis on the development and use of specific skills within lessons. In information technology, pupils' attainment is above average; they demonstrate particularly good skills associated with mouse control and use of keyboard. They are confident downloading information from the Internet and when using e-mail. Attainment in religious education is above the expectations of the Agreed Syllabus. High quality writing demonstrates a good knowledge of Christianity, Hinduism, Judaism and Islam.
9. In the core subjects of English, mathematics, information technology and religious education progress is good in Key Stage 2, with teachers building very effectively on the attainment pupils bring from Year 2. All pupils make at least good progress in each area of English. Spelling, an area of weakness identified by the school, is improving owing to a new approach to teaching this area. Although less than half the pupils at the beginning of Year 3 consistently use a joined script for handwriting, virtually all are competent by the end of the year. In mathematics, progress is good and promoted by the effective use of mathematical skills in other subjects. Progress in science is satisfactory overall. The development of knowledge is often good, but the use of independent practical skills does not develop as quickly. In history, progress is very good. Pupils have an in-depth knowledge about societies from the past and use artefacts, such as newspapers, well to find information about their topics. Good progress in art and design and technology is illustrated by the range of two- and three-dimensional work, accurate measurement and quality of finished products. In geography, good progress is illustrated by the quality of pupils' work when comparing different localities and the effective links with science when studying the environment. Progress in music and physical education is satisfactory, except in dance where it is good.

10. Throughout the school, pupils' literacy skills improve and are good by Year 6. They are used effectively across the whole curriculum. Particularly good examples are evident in pupils' work in religious education, with pupils rewriting the story of the Annunciation as a play script and in geography with poems about rain forests. Numeracy skills are satisfactory in Key Stage 1 and good in Key Stage 2. Good use is made of these skills in other subjects, including measurement in design and technology and the use of graphs in science and geography. Pupils' good information technology skills are used very effectively to support learning in other subjects. For instance, in creating maps in Year 2, designing a bedroom in design and technology and the use of a program in art.
11. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress during their time in the school, illustrated by the fact the vast majority of Year 6 pupils in the mainstream classes achieve at least Level 3 in English, mathematics and science. Pupils in the unit for moderate learning difficulties do not reach the nationally expected standards. However, their progress towards their targets is very good across the whole curriculum. The success by these pupils is linked to teaching that is exciting and imaginative. Throughout the school, boys and girls make similar progress, and differences in attainment are mostly not significant. The exception is in English where, although in 1999 over 40 per cent of boys and girls in Year 6 achieved Level 5, almost 30 per cent of boys failed to achieve Level 3 compared with three per cent of girls. A similar pattern is evident in reading and writing in Year 2. The school sets appropriate targets as pupils move through the school, which results in challenging targets for Levels 4 and 5 in English, mathematics and science. These are based on a careful analysis of each pupil's attainment during their time in the school. The school has been successful in achieving its targets recently.

Attitudes, behaviour and personal development

12. Although children under five in Reception enter school with personal and social skills below average, they soon become well integrated and display very positive attitudes to all aspects of school life. They are exceptionally well behaved and are keen to learn. Effectively supported by a caring staff, they relate well to adults, and to one another, know class routines, take responsibility for tidying up and other duties, such as taking the register or helping to give out resources for lessons. They proudly wear the badge of responsibility given to them in rotation, for example, being in charge of books for the week. They enjoy being at school and are very secure in relation to older pupils who volunteer to look after them at lunchtime. The good attitudes acquired by children under five provides a secure foundation for the next stage of learning in Key Stage 1.
13. Pupils' attitudes to learning throughout the school are very good. They show interest in their work with appropriate levels of concentration. They enjoy their lessons and are keen to share their knowledge and experiences with the class as demonstrated by a boy in Year 6 who discovered the pleasures of poetry and was excited to read to the class, WH Davies, Leisure: 'What is this life, if full of care, We have no time to stand and stare?', because he found it so peaceful! Pupils in Key Stage 1 responded with enthusiasm to their lesson on Florence Nightingale by doing their own finding out at home and making lively contributions to class discussions. Pupils show respect for others and their opinions by listening attentively. They persevere with their work especially when engaged in practical activities in design and technology, physical education and art lessons. They respond well to teachers' comments in marking and frequently reply by commenting or improving the work as suggested. They like coming to school and take a pride in their environment by making an effort to keep it free of litter. There is no evidence of disrespect for surroundings or for property.
14. Pupils with special educational needs maintain a positive self-image and develop a good attitude to their work. In lessons with practical activities, such as design and information technology and art, their involvement is intense and contributes to very good progress. Support assistants encourage confidence in the pupils to tackle challenging tasks with determination. Pupils' behaviour is increasingly good.
15. Behaviour overall is good, and very good in Key Stage 1 due to the effectiveness of the clearly defined

behaviour policy. All pupils are familiar with the policy which they helped to formulate as a whole-school effort, with input from parents and governors. At the beginning of each school year, the pupils in each class spend time establishing class rules which they agree to abide by. A clear framework is established, and understood by all. Pupils have a clear sense of the difference between acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. In lessons, most pupils behave well but occasionally in Key Stage 2, where there is an absence of a consistent management strategy, a small number of pupils behaves inappropriately and this has a detrimental impact on their own progress and that of others. At break and lunch times, pupils play amicably together. There were no incidents of inappropriate behaviour observed outside lessons, during the inspection period, but much evidence of co-operation and good relationships between pupils and staff. In the dining hall, moving to and from assembly, and coming in from the playground, the pupils move in a very relaxed but orderly manner. They are courteous, friendly, they open doors for others and say 'thank you'. There was one fixed-term exclusion last year.

16. Relationships between pupils are very good. In lessons pupils share resources and wait their turn to take part in group activities. Relationships throughout the school are a strength. Pupils play well together and offer to help each other. In Year 1 when a girl showed lack of confidence in doing the work being explained by the teacher, a boy remarked quite spontaneously 'Don't worry I will help you'. They demonstrate good humour when working in small groups, as for example, when a pupil in a language support group challenged his peer by the remark 'Come on, you can do better than that'. There was no evidence of bullying observed and pupils express confidence that, should it occur, teachers will deal with it effectively. Relationships with all adults in the school are very good. The training on behaviour management has enabled midday supervisors to be effective in maintaining a very secure environment in which the pupils operate harmoniously. Pupils are polite to visitors.
17. The personal development of pupils, including their contributions to the life of the community, is very good. The school provides many opportunities for promoting personal development. Older pupils volunteer to answer the telephone during the lunch break, which they do very proficiently. Other pupils volunteer to help the caretaker to clear up the hall after lunch. Year 6 pupils voluntarily look after the younger children at lunch times, organising games and generally seeing to their needs. Pupils show initiative as for example when a Year 4 pupil, having studied water supply in the geography lesson, decided to help conserve water by turning the tap off when cleaning her teeth instead of leaving it running, or when Year 6 pupils study amenities for young people in Macclesfield and design a fun park to keep them off the streets. Pupils work independently and often co-operate in pairs and groups. At the end of each term pupils are given more challenge in taking responsibility for evaluating their own work, editing, and improving presentation. Pupils arrange collection of funds for organised charities including the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, Dr Barnardos and local organisations. The school raises funds for the support of two children in India adopted under the auspices of Action Aid. They made collections for the children of Kosovo and provide the local old people's home with proceeds from the harvest festival. Year 2 pupils made book markers and did drawings to send to children in Romania. Environmental awareness is increased when pupils visit the 'Waste Disposal Site' in Congleton. Year 4 pupils took pride in reading, the poems they had written, to invited guests at the Heritage Centre. During the time of the inspection the recorder group were practising for their Christmas performance in the town centre. In sport, Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 girls' teams came first overall in the Cross Country Championships and Year 6 pupils took part in a 'Swimathon' raising funds for the Macclesfield Lions. The high standards of behaviour and discipline, and good attitudes for learning, identified in the previous report have been maintained and improved further.

Attendance

18. The school has very good attendance rates, which have shown a steady increase since the previous inspection. Current attendance rates are well above the national average and the level of unauthorised absences is below the national average. There is no significant difference in absence levels between classes. A few pupils take holidays during term time. The great majority of pupils arrive at school on time and lessons start very promptly. Pupils' very good attitude to attendance has a positive effect on their attainment and progress.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED

Teaching

19. The quality of teaching is good overall, the school having improved further the good standards noted in the previous inspection. Virtually all teaching is at least satisfactory, 75 per cent good or better and about 35 per cent very good or better. The quality of teaching in one of the Year 2 classes and in the special educational needs unit is especially good.
20. The teaching of children under five is usually good and often very good. Within language and literacy the teaching is good, and based on activities designed to involve the whole class, for instance when using the stories and role-play. Good use is made of books which are read with enthusiasm. The teaching of mathematics is good with an interesting range of practical activities. Good teaching about the wider world around children helps them make good progress, especially in aspects of science, geography and history. Expectations of children are realistic and lessons planned well, so that all activities have a clear purpose. Planning is based appropriately on the recommended areas of learning for children under five, although usually under a Key Stage 1 subject heading. Pupils' personal and social development is encouraged, with all staff working together to promote both independence and group activities. Children are managed well when they are working as a small, independent group. Although there are significant strengths in most of the Reception teaching, a common weakness is evident. In language and mathematical activities in particular, children are kept on the carpet for too long, often listening to the teacher. As a result they become restless and, occasionally, inattentive. Very good assessment systems are used by teachers and the results used well to inform planning.
21. In Key Stage 1, the quality of teaching is never less than satisfactory. It is very good in English and good in all other subjects, except physical education where it is satisfactory. In Key Stage 2, the quality of teaching is good in all subjects except physical education, where it is satisfactory.
22. The strengths and weaknesses exhibited in both key stages are similar, with strengths significantly outweighing weaknesses. Teachers' subject knowledge is usually good, and is often very good in English. Literacy is taught well and pupils' literacy skills are consistently developed in other subjects. The very positive influence of the literacy support teacher, working closely with the classteacher, helps to explain the particularly good teaching and progress in Year 2. A feature of many lessons is the good use of questions by teachers, which helps to explore pupils' understanding. This was a particular feature in lessons using poems as a stimulus during the literacy hour. Teachers also ensure that pupils use their writing skills in a wide range of contexts. As a result, pupils are developing interesting writing in other subjects. In many lessons, staff consolidate pupils' literacy skills with natural references to, for instance, the phoneme of the week. Mathematical skills are also developed well, especially in science and geography. Expectations of pupils are often high and pupils are challenged. Occasionally, for instance in practical science activities, more able pupils are not challenged sufficiently.
23. In almost all lessons, a wide range of methods is used well. Pupils are grouped effectively and lower attaining pupils given particularly good support. Many teachers encourage discussion but there are too few opportunities provided to promote independence or co-operative work. In science, the work is often too prescribed and pupils have few opportunities to develop their own ideas. Expectations of good behaviour are made clear to pupils and the quality of pupil management and discipline is usually very good. Occasionally, in Key Stage 2, behaviour management is not so successful and a few pupils become inattentive. This weakness is most evident in the afternoons. Virtually all lessons feature good pace and effective use of resources.
24. In subjects such as art, geography and history, good teaching and a focus on the development of skills

help pupils make good progress. In physical education, where teaching is satisfactory, pupils are inactive for too long and not enough attention is given to developing strength and stamina. The vast majority of teachers use very effective day-to-day assessment procedures. Work is marked regularly and planning informed very well by the process. Comments made are often supportive, focus on subject content as well as English and suggest ways to improve. Further, teachers usually recognise and acknowledge when pupils have responded positively, and improved, following earlier comments. Parents thought the homework to be imaginative. A good range of homework supports pupils' learning across a wide range of subjects. In addition to the strengths noted, features of much of the teaching are the very high quality of planning, organisation of activities and relationships between staff and their pupils.

25. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is very good. The practice of setting work in many subjects, which relates closely to pupils' individual targets, is becoming well established and is much improved since the previous inspection. Teachers create an atmosphere of trust and encouragement and set high expectations. Close teamwork between class teachers and support assistants ensures the effective transfer of instructions and feedback. The support assistants are very well deployed. They work to clear objectives and make a good contribution to pupils' progress. Strategies such as smaller classes, set groups for mathematics and differentiated tasks in most subjects, benefit these pupils particularly. The teaching in the special educational needs unit is very effective. All staff work effectively together and the opportunity to take pupils in small groups assists progress. Teaching in the unit is based on well defined strategies and short sessions. This allows pupils to make a 'fresh start' if things do not go well. The work is challenging, and features excellent planning, organisation and assessment. The teaching is often imaginative, as in a science session introducing light and reflection when the teacher dressed as a dentist peering into a dark mouth and as a miner looking into the darkest corners.

The curriculum and assessment

26. The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum for children under five. It is based on the recommended areas of learning for this age, but timetabled according to National Curriculum subject headings. The curriculum provided for children under five is satisfactory, with a large focus on language and literacy and mathematics. A new scheme is to be developed using the Local Education Authority's recently produced guidance. The introduction of this will help to improve further the curriculum, especially the opportunities to learn through play.
27. Four of the key issues of the last inspection were concerned with curriculum matters. The time given to teaching in Key Stage 2 was below the nationally recommended minimum; teaching time is now satisfactory for all pupils. An audit of curricular time has been carried out, and the curriculum now has good breadth and balance, though more time is needed for physical development of children under five. The breadth and balance of the English curriculum is very good, and in information technology it is excellent. All subjects now have good or very good schemes of work, ensuring continuity in pupils' learning. This is helped by good planning throughout the school in all subjects.
28. The previous inspection was critical of the use of pupils' skills in mathematics, science and design and technology. Designing is now well emphasised in design and technology, as is using and applying mathematics, not only in mathematics itself, but also in the rest of the curriculum. However, although some development has taken place in experimental and investigative science, there is still not enough emphasis on this part of the science curriculum in every class. Apart from this one recommendation of the previous inspection, all other curricular concerns have been acted on decisively, and overall there has been very good improvement in curricular provision.
29. Equality of access to, and opportunity in, the curriculum is good for under fives and very good in the other two key stages. In all sports, activities are mixed, and access to clubs and teams does not depend on gender. Although girls consistently do better than boys in English, this reflects national trends. In mathematics and science, results show that boys are better in some years, and girls in others. The school

analyses results on the basis of gender, and also of prior attainment, in order to measure individual pupil progress. Targets are set on an individual's prior attainment, so that higher attaining pupils are expected to achieve high attainment levels. Setting in Key Stage 2 mathematics helps this process, and has enabled the school to send nearly half its pupils to secondary school having already attained Level 5 of the National Curriculum, for example, two years ahead of what is expected nationally of 11 year olds. Provision for pupils' personal and social development, including health and sex education, is good and well planned.

30. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. Pupils have access to the curriculum by means of individual education plans which set out clearly the particular targets and programmes of work which will help them to acquire necessary basic skills. They specify an appropriate time scale for achieving the targets. The involvement of teachers in the creation of individual plans is much improved since the last inspection. All pupils follow the National Curriculum and the Locally Agreed Syllabus for religious education. Pupils in the unit for those with moderate learning difficulties join the rest of Key Stage 2 for assemblies and singing, for activities with visiting groups and individuals, and sometimes for physical education. Unlike the rest of the school, they also spend some time riding horses, an excellent educational exercise for pupils with significant learning difficulties.
31. The curriculum is enhanced and enriched by good provision of extra-curricular activities. As well as the choir and the recorder club, there are ten sports clubs, ranging from tennis to tap-dancing, and the school fields teams in six sports in competitions with other schools.
32. Wide-ranging assessment procedures are very effective overall throughout the school, and at least good in every subject other than design and technology, where they are satisfactory. They are particularly well developed in English, mathematics and science, and for children under five. The use of assessment in informing curricular planning is good overall, and very good in Key Stage 1. It is very good in English, mathematics and science, and at least good in all subjects apart from religious education and music, where it is satisfactory. Methods of assessment and tracking forms are devised by the assessment co-ordinator, and put into practice by senior management through subject co-ordinators. Assessment results are analysed meticulously, and used to inform teaching, the curriculum, target setting for individual pupils, and target setting for the school. Assessment is greatly helped by the use of good home-school contact books, and by good marking of work, the best of which records what pupils can do and sets short-term individual targets. An established programme of testing is identifying more precisely the area and level of need for pupils with special educational needs over a wider range of skills since the previous inspection. Progress on the pupils' individual plans is regularly reviewed, and the discussions involved enable pupils to be aware of the rate at which they are mastering their targets. The school's formal monitoring documentation is fully operative, and effective, enabling the staff to measure the value added by individual education plans and particular learning programmes. The knowledge gained is immediately fed into further planning, either individual or whole school.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

33. The school has maintained the high standards identified in the previous report. Overall provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. Provision for the pupils' moral, social and cultural development is very good and that for spiritual development is good. Provision is identifiable in all aspects of the school's work but is not yet consistently included in all planning.
34. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is good and is often presented through assemblies and other occasions when pupils are encouraged to reflect on their own and other people's lives and how they have been able to help one another. Acts of worship provide opportunities for reflection on the theme and to offer a prayer to God but the quality of such occasions is inconsistent. The timetable provides time for a daily act of worship either as a class or a key stage; there is insufficient space in the hall for all the school to come together. Other opportunities for spiritual development are apparent in the way the

school makes good use of the study of other faiths. The pupils are given opportunities to learn about all the world's major faiths in addition to Christianity and learn about festivals. Pupils in Key Stage 1 learn about the stories of Zaccheus, Samuel, Joseph and Moses with clear links to the theme of families. Pupils in Key Stage 2 learn about Judaism and the festival of Hannukah which is appropriate for the time of year. They also learn about Hinduism and have taken the opportunity to find out more about this religion from the Internet. Pupils in both key stages are given the opportunity to write prayers which are displayed in the classroom. Pupils remember happy occasions and what makes them laugh, they also consider other feelings, such as fear, and are taught some strategies for dealing with them. Their sense of awe is apparent in the way they respond to the presentation of an Advent calendar and to the consideration of the natural phenomenon of a river in geography.

35. Very good provision is made for pupils' moral development. The school makes strenuous efforts to maintain a well ordered community with high expectations for behaviour and personal relationships. The new behaviour policy was drawn up in consultation with pupils and staff, it is clearly understood and usually consistently applied throughout the school. Classrooms have a set of agreed rules and pupils have a good understanding of what is right and wrong. They are given opportunities to reflect on inappropriate behaviour. The implementation of the new policy is having a positive effect on behaviour within the school, this is reflected by parents' comments. The policy and programme for sex education, although included in personal, social and health education, are firmly rooted in family life. Pupils are given opportunities to consider moral issues such as keeping animals in zoos and the rights and wrongs of reintroducing a market into the centre of town. Pupils are also encouraged to consider others and those less fortunate than themselves. Good examples are to be found in the support given to two children in India through Action Aid, collections and donations to charity of their earnings from singing outside a local store at Christmas. Parents support the good values and attitudes which the school promotes.
36. Provision for pupils' social development is very good and well promoted through strategies within the school. Pupils' efforts are valued and celebrated; merit points and certificates are awarded for effort and behaviour and their work is carefully displayed around the building. They are all expected to take responsibility within their classrooms and, although there is no formal system, pupils do volunteer for other duties. This sense of responsibility is apparent in all classes. The youngest pupils have daily responsibilities within the classroom which they undertake happily. Older pupils gladly give their time to look after the young ones after play, to answer the telephone at lunchtime and to help with clearing the hall after lunch. There is a strong emphasis on behaviour, feelings and the need to establish good personal relationships. Good examples are seen in the way pupils help each other in classrooms share resources well. Pupils play well together and are considerate of the needs of others. The play areas are used well and the pupils are involved in decisions about the activities allowed in them. There are good links with other parts of the community through visits and through sponsorship by a local store. The school choir takes part in local music festivals and has recently been part of a large choir singing in the Nynex Centre in Manchester. Both choir and recorder groups play for the local old people's home and in the town centre at Christmas. Last year such activity raised monies for a local hospice and for the South American Hurricane appeal and in November the school received a certificate from Dr Barnardos in recognition of the money raised for less fortunate children. A wide range of extra-curricular activity is provided and teams take part in a variety of competitions. The school currently holds the cup awarded for debating. These activities make a strong contribution to pupils' personal development.
37. Provision for cultural development is very good and linked to many aspects of the curriculum. In history, pupils learn about Victorians, ancient Egyptians and ancient Greeks and also make good use of information technology to support searches for information. Studies are made of people in history; Key Stage 1 pupils learn about Florence Nightingale and in Key Stage 2 about Henry the Eighth and life in Tudor England. Visitors are used well to support this work, for example, an elderly person talking about nursing and the work of Florence Nightingale. Visits to local museums and places of interest support the curriculum well. A visit to Eyam provided good support for work on the village and the effect of the plague on village life. An appreciation of other cultures is also promoted, for example, through making Rangoli patterns, examining the decorations on pots and through visits by a lady from India who does some cooking with the younger pupils. The work of artists is used well to support this work and pupils

study the work of Lowry, Picasso and Monet. Pupils are encouraged to paint in the style of these painters. All these experiences are having a positive effect on the personal development of the pupils in the school.

Support, guidance and pupils' welfare

38. The provision for pupils' support, guidance and welfare is very good, maintaining the high standards detailed in the previous report. All staff know the pupils well and this enables them to provide very good personal care and support. Arrangements to prepare pupils for their entry into school are very good enabling them to settle quickly and make good progress in the Reception classes. Arrangements for supporting pupils' academic progress are very good. Procedures and records for assessing attainment and progress are very good ensuring teachers are well informed about pupils and give them very good advice and support. Very good liaison arrangements and support for pupils ensure Year 6 pupils are confident and well advised about their move to secondary school.
39. The good relationships between staff and pupils give pupils confidence to approach members of staff if they have worries or problems. Parents feel the school takes good care of their children. Teachers are particularly careful in ensuring that a responsible adult collects the youngest pupils at the end of the day. The good support given to pupils with special educational needs, including those in the unit for moderate learning difficulties, helps their good progress. Pupils with special educational needs receive good support in their daily learning. They get sensitive guidance on points of behaviour. Strategies such as the structured play room contribute a calming influence on lunch time behaviour. The precise behavioural targets for individual pupils give them awareness of, and opportunity to be responsible for, their progress. Not as much reference to these is made in normal lesson times as might be expected. Pupils have access to a range of specialist services, much increased since the last inspection, with whom the school has established very good relationships. Particularly valued by the school are the links with the education psychology service, which have contributed to raising the quality of pupil welfare and guidance to a high level.
40. Procedures for promoting discipline and good behaviour are effective and have a good impact upon pupils' attitudes, relationships and standards of behaviour. A clear policy for discipline and behaviour is consistently applied by the great majority of staff. The strong emphasis on praise and rewards is effective. The very good use of the Home/School contact book to record awards is a key feature and the good relationships between staff and pupils help foster good behaviour during play and lunch times. Arrangements to promote regular and prompt attendance are good. Registers are well maintained, absences followed up promptly and clear statements made to parents on the importance of regular attendance, including effective discouragement of holidays in term time, have resulted in a steady increase in overall attendance rates since the previous inspection.
41. The school's procedures for child protection are very good. The policy has been very well written for the needs of the school, with a very strong and sensitive approach to awareness and identifications of issues. An outstanding feature is the section referring to behavioural signs in relation to suspected abuse. There is close and effective liaison with appropriate local agencies. First Aid arrangements are good. The school is very clean, tidy and secure. Health and safety policies and procedures are effective in identifying and dealing with hazards within its control. The school had identified correctly the parking of cars, by parents, in the road next to the school and the potential danger to children crossing the adjacent road as hazards. Pupils' health and well-being, including drugs awareness and sex education, are promoted very well.

Partnership with parents and the community

42. The school has good partnerships with parents and the community. It has worked hard to maintain the standards detailed in the previous report. The success it achieves has a positive impact on pupils' attitudes, attainment and progress. Parents and staff have a high level of informal contact especially at the start and end of the school day. The great majority of parents feel that they are welcomed into the

school and that staff are helpful and approachable. The school works very hard to foster this helpful and open atmosphere with all staff and many governors contributing well. Parents are informed well about the life of the school in regular newsletters, the school prospectus and the governors' annual report.

43. The school makes very good steps to keep parents informed, for example, information on topics of study, behaviour policy and the homework policy are clearly displayed outside classrooms. Annual reports are of a consistently very high quality. They give accurate and detailed information on attainment and progress, set clear targets and areas for development, and include opportunity for parents and pupils to comment. Reports are very well supported by consultation sessions. The Home/School contact is being used very effectively as a method of two-way communication, especially in relation to homework.
44. Parents' involvement with their children's education is good. Many support homework and regularly hear their children read at home. They give good support to performances, social and fundraising events, and consultation sessions. The Friends of the School give very valuable financial support and also provide a good range of social functions for parents and pupils. Parents, grandparents and other local people give very good and well organised help in the classroom. This has a positive effect on pupils' progress especially for the younger pupils and in relation to information technology and history. The parents of children with special educational needs are involved in the process of identification, and are kept fully informed of their children's progress at all stages. Parents are always invited to attend review meetings and an 'open door' policy encourages them to visit the school whenever they feel necessary.
45. The school makes good use of the local community to support pupils' learning through a very good range of visits to local places of interest, and the use of local people and businesses. This has a positive impact on pupils' standards of attainment, especially in relation to history and geography, and also on their personal development through their awareness of local environmental and social issues. Governors give good support in actively raising the profile of the school within the local community.

THE MANAGEMENT AND EFFICIENCY OF THE SCHOOL

Leadership and management

46. The leadership and management of this very good school together constitute one of its many strengths. The Headteacher is a dynamic leader, providing very strong and clear educational direction, not least from her own commitment and example as a part-time classteacher and teacher of music throughout the school. The quality of her leadership is excellent. She is extremely well assisted in achieving the aims and values of the school through all its work by a hard-working senior management team. They make a significant contribution to the ethos of the school. Likewise, the Governing Body fulfils its managerial duties and responsibilities under the guidance of a committed chairman with a strong sense of purpose. The special educational needs co-ordinator works very effectively with the Headteacher and the Governing Body in maintaining the strong stance the school takes in this regard. Very good management and organisation of the provision for pupils with special educational needs have strengthened provision even further since the previous inspection. It has achieved a strong whole-school ethos for progress in special educational needs. Good strategic monitoring to enable the school to make a clear statement of trends in pupils' progress and to evaluate priorities are examples of the many initiatives. An effective process of review and self-evaluation enables the school to identify the necessary focus on highest attaining pupils as an area of special need, and the development of its valuable learning programmes to the benefit of pupils with weaknesses in mathematics. Working closely together, the Headteacher, governors and staff combine to form a formidable and powerful team determinedly pursuing the future successful development of the school.
47. The Governing Body has established a number of committees to manage the discharge of their duties. This is good and efficient practice. They share their responsibilities in accordance with their particular interests and strengths. Thus committees have been set up to deal with finance, premises, staffing and the curriculum. There is a separate committee to deal with complaints. A regular system of committee

meetings is in place, each of which reports to the whole Governing Body. This is an extremely efficient and effective method of working which successfully supports the school as it progresses towards achieving its targets.

48. The school's performance is closely monitored by the Headteacher and the senior management team. Members of the senior management team regularly work with colleagues to evaluate teaching and curricular development in the school, and report accordingly to the Governing Body. In consultation with governors, the school staff together construct a relevant development plan which closely reflects the future needs of the school. Test results are scrutinised and the ensuing curriculum and its teaching adjusted in the light of the analysis. Challenging but manageable targets and priorities are agreed and reasonable timescales are set. Members of the Governing Body take an active interest in this matter and regularly receive reports to ensure the plan is being implemented.
49. The governors are fully aware of their responsibilities and duties with regard to monitoring the curriculum through observation of the quality of the teaching in classrooms. However, they wisely delegate this professional duty to the Headteacher and the senior management team who undertake these responsibilities on their behalf conscientiously, reporting back as required. The Headteacher has established a number of systems to monitor the school's performance. For instance, she collects pupils' exercise books when these are completed to acknowledge each pupil's achievements. Curriculum co-ordinators, for example, scrutinise all planning, checking that pupils receive a series of lessons in all subjects which will provide an unbroken sequence of learning. They also check for any unnecessary repetition or overlap in the content of lessons. This is good practice and an important part of monitoring the curriculum. Key members of staff are relieved of their class commitment regularly in order to monitor their subject in other classes. Meanwhile, governors use their time profitably in assisting teachers with group-work in class in a range of lessons, most particularly in literacy, numeracy and information technology. The Key Stage 1 co-ordinator is responsible for the early years and monitors both teaching and children's work effectively.
50. The implementation of the new literacy and numeracy lessons has been fully supported by members of the Governing Body. Two governors have undergone training alongside teachers. All subject areas have been 'adopted' by governors so that every subject that is taught in the school is specially cared for and nothing is without a 'champion'.
51. Curriculum co-ordinators are assigned for each subject area. The school takes one subject as a focus each term to ensure that every subject is being continually reviewed and updated as appropriate. This system keeps the curriculum alive, and ensures that no subject is neglected. For instance, next term the co-ordinator for religious education is attending a course on assessment which should benefit the assessment of religious education throughout the school. However, co-ordinators do not systematically report to the Governing Body about their work. This limits the ability of governors to assess the school's progress, especially in subjects where no test data are available.
52. The school's development planning is very good. The governors regularly review their planning, and consider how far they have moved in achieving their targets. Staff responsibilities are well-defined, and there are opportunities for staff to determine their own targets in professional conversations with the headteacher. These systems ensure improvements in practice are identified and high standards of teaching pursued. The school has made very good progress since the last inspection and it is very well poised to maintain the improvements already achieved and to make further progress. The school's action plan, drawn up after the last inspection, has been fully implemented. Statutory requirements are fully met by the Governing Body.
53. The ethos of the school is very good. It sharply reflects the school's own clear aims and values as set out in its documentation. The school is a caring community where every pupil, including those with special educational needs, is valued and respected. Teachers work extremely hard to provide a stimulating and well-organised environment for their classes. For example, the quality of displays is high and reflects the work of all children, including those with special educational needs. Notice boards around the school

provide parents with opportunities to read various policies, such as those dealing with homework and behaviour, and other documents about the curriculum in the present term. Relationships are very good within the school with all adults and pupils working harmoniously together in a happy and secure atmosphere. The ethos of the school has a significant impact upon standards. The entire staff, including learning support assistants, ancillary staff, the cleaners and the site manager, work hard together, following the dedicated and tireless model provided by the Headteacher. She is a tower of strength.

Staffing, accommodation and learning resources

54. The school has good staffing levels and class sizes are below the national average. This is partly due to the Headteacher teaching a Year 3 class for half the week. This also helps to ensure that the school can maintain single age classes. The special educational needs unit is well staffed. There are sufficient expertise and experience amongst the teachers to cover the National Curriculum, except for limitations in the areas of information technology and music. The school also benefits from a very good complement of experienced support staff. Both work together very well and are effective in supporting pupils' learning and progress. A good number of experienced and well qualified support assistants helps the teaching of pupils with special educational needs, and contributes significantly to achieving the very good progress. A very good in-service training programme keeps this team up-to-date and enables them to contribute confidently. In addition, the school is fortunate to have the benefit of numerous parents, grandparents, visitors and governors who assist and help to promote pupils' progress. In particular, their contribution to information technology is valued.
55. The arrangements to support teachers new to the school, including recently qualified, are good. There is a teacher who is in her third term of teaching, although new to the school in September. She is very well supported and her mentor is one of the particularly effective teachers in the school. Curriculum co-ordinator have a clear understanding of their roles in relation to the monitoring of pupils' work and the quality of teaching in their subjects, as well as planning for further development. They do not, however, systematically report to the Governing Body about their work. The arrangements for appraisal are based, initially, on a whole school process. As a result there is a corporate approach to the outcomes of the appraisal procedures. Individual discussions, together with the priorities identified in the school development plan, inform the arrangements for staff development. These are very good and have resulted in significant improvements in the teaching of, and as a result pupils' progress in, areas such as spelling and information technology. Curriculum co-ordinators take an active role in the in-service training for their areas.
56. The administrative staff and site manager contribute to the smooth running of the school. All staff, including lunchtime supervisors, who have received appropriate training, are hard working and contribute to the positive ethos and success of the school. The involvement of visiting professionals and specialists is well managed and has a positive effect on pupils' learning.
57. Accommodation is satisfactory and being improved. The school is in a good state of repair and buildings are mostly adequate for the number and age of children. Most classrooms, including those in the recently completed mobile accommodation, are spacious and enable the curriculum to be taught effectively. The rooms for Reception children are particularly attractive and well organised. The special educational needs unit consists of two rooms, these enable effective group work to take place. One of the Year 3 classes is currently taught in an area of the hall which cannot be used for physical education. The area is partitioned from the remainder of the hall and the kitchen serving area. The space is adequate, but the noise from the hall and kitchen sometimes disrupts the work, for instance when pupils cannot be heard when reading aloud. Building of a new classroom for this group of pupils is due to start soon. The hall is too small for whole-school assemblies and also for effective physical education lessons, particularly for older pupils. The library area in Key Stage 2 now houses a large number of computers and cannot be used regularly by pupils undertaking independent research. The school is planning to build a dedicated library in the future; some money has been set aside for this and current fund-raising is aimed at supporting the project. A corridor contains a number of new computers and is used for teaching information technology skills. The current layout means that the area is sometimes difficult to manage and not all pupils can see the teacher easily. The number of useful teaching areas for special educational

needs groups is limited, but a good range of specialist resources available for work with pupils with special educational needs has a positive impact on the progress they make. Outside accommodation for children under five is not adequate and generally unavailable during late autumn, winter and early spring. This inhibits the opportunities for pupils to undertake daily physical activity in a secure area. In other respects the outdoor areas are good, providing opportunities for physical education, sport, science, geography and art. Displays around the school are of good quality, informative and contain a good mix of teachers' and pupils' work.

58. The previous report suggested that there were areas where resources were inadequate, in particular in geography and information technology. Resources in all areas are now at least satisfactory, and in some areas good. In particular, the number and range of computers are good and enable pupils to receive class lessons with sufficient machines and good access. In addition, classroom computers allow teachers to incorporate aspects such as word processing or numeracy into classroom based lessons. In geography, the range of maps and atlases is still limited and there are insufficient artefacts for use in religious education. Literacy work is assisted because there is a good range of both fiction and non-fiction books throughout the school. In general, there is a variety of resources appropriate to the age and interests of the pupils and the curriculum taught. The staffing, accommodation and learning resources allow the curriculum to be taught effectively.

The efficiency of the school

59. The school is run in an efficient and effective manner. Financial planning is good. The educational aims of the school are well supported through the annual budget allocation process which is clearly linked to the details contained within the school development plan. The school has a very effective programme for building maintenance and redecoration. Apart from this area, the budget process does not look beyond the next financial year. The Headteacher and governors are well aware of the financial implications of the fluctuations in numbers on roll year on year and the level of commitments for the future within the budget. However, they have not developed a detailed financial plan to take account of these beyond the immediate financial year. Balances, accrued through stringent financial management, have been spent or are planned to be spent, wisely on non-recurring items. The school has estimated for a prudent level of balances for the end of the current financial year. Financial administration and budgetary control are effective. Funds provided to support the in-service training of teachers and the provision for pupils with special educational needs are used very effectively and have had a positive impact on pupils' progress.
60. The Headteacher and governors receive accurate and up-to-date monitoring information. There has been no audit of the school since the last inspection, but procedures and systems are well managed and administered. Administrative support is effective in ensuring the smooth running of the school. The school takes very good steps to ensure value in purchasing of materials, equipment and services. The decision to employ its own cleaners has been cost effective, provides a higher standard of service and has further developed teamwork within all staff. The site manager makes a significant contribution to achieving cost effective maintenance and decoration of the premises.
61. The school makes very good use of teaching and support staff, with a significant impact on pupils' progress, especially in relation to special educational needs, including those with moderate learning difficulties, mathematics and information technology. Good use is made overall of learning resources and the accommodation. Resources are used very well in relation to information technology, art, design and technology and for pupils with special educational needs, with a positive impact on pupils' progress.
62. The school receives funding at a level about average for similar schools nationally. Taking into account the below average attainment on entry, pupils' overall very good progress, the good quality of education and the very effective leadership, the school provides very good value for money.

PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN UNDER FIVE

63. Provision for children under five is good. The children enter the Reception classes, full time, at the beginning of the academic year in which they are five. At the time of the inspection one of the Reception classes contained children who were all under five. In the other class, a little over half were under five. Attainment on entry into the school is below average overall. Attainment on entry is lowest in language and literacy and mathematics, and highest in creative development. The school provides the children with a secure and caring environment with the daily routines firmly established. The broad and balanced curriculum is based on the recommended areas of learning for this age, but timetabled according to National Curriculum subject headings. Children make good progress and by the time they are five most reach the nationally expected standards, except in the area of language and literacy where standards remain below.

Personal and social development

64. Children's personal and social development are given good emphasis. Children usually settle well into the routines of the Reception classes. The majority are happy and confident, even though they are in their first term in school. Most work happily on their own, alongside others, as well as in groups. They play well together, share resources and take turns. Children settle to independent tasks quickly, but tend to become restless if the teacher's introduction is too long. Achievement in this area is satisfactory, with children making generally good progress. Most of the children are interested in the range of activities, taking part in them with enjoyment. They also respond well to the different adults they meet. Independence is encouraged through a range of responsibilities. These include returning registers to the office and acting as monitors, for instance 'to look after the books'. Children who are nearly five work with concentration and persevere with their learning well. The lack of opportunities for outdoor play, including using ride-on and push and pull toys, restricts aspects of social development associated with these activities. Children show an increasing independence in dressing and personal hygiene.

Language and literacy

65. Children enter the Reception classes with language development that is consistently below average. From this starting point, they make good progress in the development of language and literacy skills. However, by the time they are five, most children have not attained the expected standards in reading and writing. Teachers provide children with a wide range of activities which support the development of language and literacy. The literacy work is often based on the format for the literacy hour. Staff offer many opportunities for children to talk with an adult, for instance when engaged in practical and building activities or during role play in 'Noah's Ark'. Children are encouraged to handle books carefully by the teachers and regularly take books home to share with their family. Talking about and sharing books with individuals and groups of children support their understanding that print carries meaning and that pages are turned from right to left. They listen with obvious enjoyment to adults reading in class. Early writing skills are being developed and most children copy or trace different letters, although often this lacks sufficient accuracy. By the age of five, children identify a few initial sounds and the small number of higher attainers read simple text well. Most average attainers retell a story by reference to the pictures. All are aware of the purpose of writing, most write their names and attempt to form their letters correctly. Lower attaining children find this difficult. A small minority of children write simple sentences, for instance, when describing pictures they have drawn. Teachers and classroom assistants emphasise this area of learning throughout the day, especially through discussion and questions. Teaching in this area is generally good, although there are occasions when children have to sit listening for too long and as a result they become restless.

Mathematics

66. Children are provided with suitable practical activities for the development of mathematical skills, together with number work using workbooks. They gain a satisfactory understanding of mathematical language through activities and games which involve sorting and matching. Children make good progress and, by the age of five, they attain the expected standard. They are familiar with numbers to ten, they recognise and copy these numerals and count the number of objects in pictures. Most children develop a knowledge of simple addition, adding one on to a single digit number. The current emphasis on teaching is number but, by the age of five, children recognise simple two-dimensional shapes, such as squares, triangles and circles. They use terms such as tall and short correctly, and draw objects longer or shorter than the ones illustrated. Teaching in this area of learning is good and suitable mathematical language is introduced during a wide range of activities.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

67. Opportunities to develop children's knowledge of the world around them are good, and is, in part, linked with the identification of specific subjects in class timetables. The children describe the properties of a range of materials using their senses. They know the names of the different senses. They draw simple maps of their journey to school, identifying such features as traffic lights. They know that life in a hot country, such as Kenya, differs from life in this country. In religious education, children know some stories from the Old Testament, such as Noah's Ark. They are familiar with the events leading up to the birth of Jesus and its link with Christmas. In the development of more technological aspects of learning, they make models from a range of construction apparatus. When using the computer, children use the mouse with reasonable control to write their first names. Children under five make good progress in learning about the world around them and achieve satisfactory standards. Teaching of this area of learning is good; it is aided by teachers' secure subject knowledge and effective links with other areas.

Creative development

68. Children's attainment in creative development is satisfactory and they make sound progress in all aspects. The children are effectively prepared to start on the National Curriculum. The class teachers and support staff provide interesting and appropriate activities in each session and a good balance is kept between free activity and teacher directed work. Children produce good self-portraits, which usually included recognisable features such as hair and eye colour; not all however include head, body, arms and legs. They experiment with colour when painting scenes to illustrate the story of Noah's Ark. Some of the work depicting clouds, rain and the rainbow were particularly good. They know the names of a wide range of colours. Role play is developed well through a range of different activities, such in Noah's Ark. Children know that musical sounds can be loud or soft, and experiment using different instruments to demonstrate this. Teaching in this area is good, especially in relation to the artistic area of creative development.

Physical development

69. The children achieve satisfactorily in their physical development and make satisfactory progress. Through their work using modelling materials, pencils, scissors and brushes, they show a growing control and ability to manage smaller items, and a few show good control when shading or painting pictures. Children show a growing control of balance. At the present time, children do not have sufficient opportunities to develop physical skills in practical sessions. This is associated with the lack of appropriate outdoor space that can be used throughout the whole year. As a result, there are too few opportunities to use ride-on and push and pull toys and this restricts progress in this area. The teaching of physical development is satisfactory overall.
70. The quality of teaching for children under five is mostly good, and often very good. Work is planned thoroughly, with an appropriate balance of teacher directed and purposeful child initiated activities. It is

based on the recommended areas of learning for children under five, but often identified under National Curriculum headings. Good teaching promotes the rapid development of literacy and mathematical skills. Good use is made of books, such as 'Handa's Surprise', which are read enthusiastically. Good discussion is promoted, with children being encouraged to recall the main events of the story and their order. Good teaching about the world around them helps children make good progress, especially in aspects of science, geography and religious education. Personal and social development is encouraged. Children are managed well, although there are occasions when they sit for too long listening to the teacher and, as a result, lose interest and become restless. Class teacher and support staff work well together, planning activities effectively.

71. Very effective assessment procedures are carried out. The class teachers assess and record children's progress in all areas of learning. The results of assessment are used well to plan the next stage of work to meet the needs of different children in the class. The analysis of baseline assessment, which is completed early in the children's first term in school, is used effectively to inform planning and identify those with specific needs.
72. The Key Stage 1 co-ordinator is responsible for the early years and monitors both teaching and children's work effectively. The curriculum provided for children under five is satisfactory, with a large focus on language and literacy and mathematics. A new scheme is to be developed using the Local Education Authority's recently produced guidance. The introduction of this will help to improve further the curriculum, especially the opportunities to learn through play. The classroom accommodation for Reception is good. The rooms are well set out to help meet the needs of young children. Resources for indoor activities are good. Little is currently available for promoting a wide range of outdoor work, including directed play, owing to the lack of suitable outdoor accommodation during late autumn, winter and early spring.

ENGLISH, MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE

English

73. In 1999, when pupils left the school at the end of Key Stage 2, attainment in English was well above the national average and that of similar schools. In the National Curriculum tests in 1999, 89 per cent of pupils achieved the expected Level 4 or above, and 47 per cent the higher Level 5. Both these figures were well above the average and the results of similar schools. The proportions of boys and girls gaining Level 5 were similar, but almost 30 per cent of boys failed to achieve Level 4, compared with only three per cent of girls. The results were an improvement over those of the previous year, when they were above the national average. The attainment of current Year 6 pupils is not as good as last year, although still above average. The drop is, in part at least, associated with the very high proportion of young pupils in the class. Almost 40 per cent will not be 11 until July or August.
74. In 1999, at the end of Key Stage 1, attainment in writing was above the national average and the results of similar schools. The results in reading were similar to the national average and the results of similar schools. In reading, 88 per cent of pupils achieved at least the expected Level 2, a figure above the national average and the results of similar schools. However, 26 per cent achieved the higher Level 3, similar to the national average, but below the results of similar schools. In writing, 94 per cent of pupils achieved Level 2 or above, well above the national average and the average for similar schools. The proportion achieving Level 3, at 12 per cent, was above the average figure and that for similar schools. Results were much better than the previous year. The performance of boys tended to be below that of girls in both reading and writing. The attainment of current Year 2 pupils is close to the average and similar to last year.
75. The rate of progress is good in both key stages and, taken with that in Reception, it is very good overall, with attainment rising from below average on entry into the school to well above average when they

leave. Few pupils in the mainstream school are on the special educational needs register. Those that are on the register usually have individual education plans that have targets related to English. In relation to these targets the pupils make good progress in both key stages and very good progress overall, which is reflected in the fact that, in 1999, only one Year 6 pupil failed to achieve at least Level 3.

76. Speaking and listening skills are similar to, or on occasions above, the national expectations throughout the school. In Key Stage 1, both listening and speaking skills are satisfactorily developed. There is more variation in Key Stage 2. Here listening skills are often good, but in some classes there are occasions when a minority of pupils does not listen carefully enough. This is most evident in some lessons in the upper key stage and during the afternoon. Speaking, when replying to questions or in other class activities is good, but there is a tendency to speak too fast when reading out loud. This occurs, for instance, when reading poetry or from a book. Progress in each key stage is good. Activities across the curriculum are used successfully to develop the pupils' speaking skills and extend their vocabulary. By the end of Key Stage 1, many pupils explain their ideas sensibly when talking in small groups, but are less confident when talking to the whole class. They listen attentively to their teacher and to other adults and pupils. Pupils in Year 6 talk very confidently about a range of subjects and offer opinions willingly, for instance, about the poems by Robert Louis Stephenson and Ted Hughes which they have read. Pupils take an active part in discussions and communicate their ideas effectively within the classroom. In most cases, pupils listen well so that their comments relate to those made by other pupils. They wait their turn to respond. The success in developing speaking and listening skills is associated often with skilled teaching; pupils know that they will have opportunities to make a contribution and that this will, in turn, be valued.
77. Attainment in reading at the end of Key Stage 1 is similar to the average. At the end of Key Stage 2 it is above the national average. In both key stages, equal numbers of boys and girls are higher attainers. However, lower attaining pupils are almost always boys. Pupils read regularly in school and at home. They make good progress. At the end of Key Stage 1, about three quarters of pupils read increasingly complex texts fluently and half talk about the content with understanding. Many retell a story they have read previously with good detail. Almost all pupils use a variety of reading skills and strategies, including letter sounds, to tackle unfamiliar words. The school's recent focus on spelling strategies linked to the sound of a letter or groups of letters is aiding this aspect of reading. Lower attaining pupils have not yet developed good phonic skills to enable them to tackle unknown words confidently, but this is improving. They are introduced to a good range of books and read for enjoyment and information. Pupils in Key Stage 2 continue to make good progress in reading and, by the time they are in Year 6, three quarters read independently and accurately from a range of texts. They are confident to tackle fiction, poetry and non-fiction. All pupils recall a story in detail and talk about the events, characters and plot of books they have read. They make their preferences clear about their favourite books and authors. In lessons, pupils express a preference for different styles of poetry, comparing the work of one poet with that of another. Pupils from Year 2 onwards know about, and use, the contents and index of non-fiction books. By the end of Key Stage 2, about three-quarters know about the classification system used in most libraries, but not all are sure how it works. The lack of easy access to a school library limits progress in this area.
78. The pupils' attainment in writing is generally in line with the national average, and some is above, at the end of Key Stage 1. Progress is good, and by Year 2, three quarters of pupils write for a range of purposes and in a variety of styles, including poetry, instructions and observations. They show an awareness of the reader when writing, for instance, instructions for making bread. Virtually all pupils write independently, convey meaning clearly and have a good understanding of sentence structure, including the use of capital letters and full stops. Higher attainers also use question marks correctly. They use suitable vocabulary and their words are usually spelt correctly or are recognisable. In handwriting, they form their letters correctly, but only about a third use a cursive script regularly by the end of Year 2. Progress in writing is good in Key Stage 2 and pupils in Year 6 attain standards that are above average. They use exciting and interesting language when writing poems, stories or reports. Pupils identify similes and metaphors in poems they read and use these to enhance their own writing. Pupils' work shows a good understanding of grammar, with the effective use of increasingly complex sentences, as well as short ones for emphasis. There is a good range of writing appropriate to different subjects,

including stories, reports, poems, letters and play scripts. They understand the structure of stories and their creative writing includes suitable 'beginning, middle and end'. Most pupils use paragraphs correctly and include a wide range of suitable adjectives and adverbs. Punctuation is usually of a high standard. Pupils work hard to develop their handwriting; almost all use a cursive style and for most pupils it is reasonably neat. Spelling is an area of relative weakness, which is being tackled by the school. The introduction of a new method of teaching spelling throughout the school is having a positive effect on standards of spelling, especially in Key Stage 1 and early in Key Stage 2.

79. Throughout the school, pupils' literacy skills improve and are good by Year 6. They are used effectively across the whole curriculum. Particularly good examples are evident in pupils' work in religious education, with pupils rewriting the story of the Annunciation as a play script and in geography with poems about rain forests.
80. Pupils with special educational needs in the mainstream classes make good progress in lessons and when withdrawn for group work during the literacy hour. This progress is usually the result of carefully planned work, which is matched well to their attainment. As a result, they have success when working independently. Another reason is the high quality, sensitive teaching provided by literacy support staff. Pupils in the special educational needs unit make very good progress towards their targets. This is due to exciting teaching and effectively planned, short, well-focussed activities.
81. The pupils' attitudes to learning in English are good. They are generally attentive and responsive listeners, interested in the content of lessons and eager to contribute their ideas. These features are occasionally less evident for older pupils, especially in a Year 5 class. They settle quickly to group or individual work within the literacy hour and maintain their concentration while writing on their set tasks. Pupils in both key stages work well independently or in groups on the work set for them. The ability to make good use of independent sessions during literacy is already well developed in Year 1. Occasionally when the independent task has not been understood by the whole group, pupils sensibly explain to each other what needs to be done. Pupils complete their work and respond positively to teachers' comments about how to improve work further. They concentrate when using books in the classroom. All pupils enjoy reading and talk enthusiastically about books and stories or poems they have read.
82. The teaching of English is good throughout the school, and very good in Key Stage 1 and Year 6. All staff have worked hard to implement the National Literacy Strategy effectively. The purposes of the week's lessons are clearly and helpfully explained to pupils and reviewed during the week. High quality day-to-day assessment procedures, including marking, are used effectively to aid planning and guide pupils towards further improvement. Whole-class sessions are well led and skilful questioning helps pupils appreciate, for instance, how the poems they have read differ. Work is well matched to pupils' needs and independent tasks are managed very effectively. Teachers are secure in their knowledge and understanding of aspects of English being taught. This is illustrated by the confident use of technical English vocabulary during literacy lessons and, where relevant, in other subjects. As a result, pupils use the terms correctly when describing their work. Teachers manage pupils well, and use praise and encouragement to good effect. In the best lessons, expectations are high, the tasks motivate and interest pupils and the views of pupils are valued. Some of the most effective lessons involved class teacher and literacy support teacher working as a team. Pupils benefited from the relaxed way these staff worked together, consistently co-operating and developing each other's ideas further. Homework is good and supports learning of work in the classroom. All teachers effectively develop language skills across all subjects of the curriculum.
83. The subject meets statutory requirements and the curriculum provided is very broad and balanced. Good planning of the curriculum enables all aspects of English, including extended writing, to be developed well. It very effectively promotes the development of pupils' literacy skills. This is a significant improvement over the previous inspection when there was no long-term plan or scheme of work. The school has implemented the National Literacy Strategy very well throughout the school. Work is

supported by a good policy and clear guidance to ensure the gradual development and extension of pupils' knowledge and skills. Assessment procedures are very good. They range from the use of systematic marking, regular assessment for each pupil in all areas of English to the use of a wide range of standardised and National Curriculum tests. The results of assessment are used effectively to aid planning and to inform curricular development, such as the changes in the teaching of spelling. Results of assessment data are also used to set specific targets for each child as they move through the school. These targets are regularly reviewed. Analysis of assessment data has also revealed the relative under performance of some boys. Provision is being monitored to see how this weakness can be addressed.

84. The two co-ordinators have worked hard to develop literacy throughout the school. All staff have a clear understanding about the development of the subject and are very well supported by the co-ordinators. Good in-service training has been provided which has helped in the effective introduction of the National Literacy Strategy. Teachers' planning and pupils' work are monitored regularly, and teaching monitored through direct observation in the classroom. The school has a large quantity of books, including sufficient quantities of group reading books. The selection of both non-fiction and fiction books is good. Accommodation is generally satisfactory. There are however two weaknesses which the school plans to address. One Year 3 class is taught in part of the hall. Noise from physical education lessons and the kitchen sometimes makes it difficult for pupils to be heard when they read aloud or answer questions. Library facilities are limited and access affected because of the area's use for information technology teaching. The strength of English throughout the school, identified in the previous report, has been maintained and improved further.

Mathematics

85. Results in National Curriculum tests in 1999 showed that overall attainment was in line with the national average at the end of Key Stage 1 and well above average at the end of Key Stage 2. Scrutiny of last year's work confirms these results, but this year's work shows that attainment in Year 6 is not as high as last year. Overall attainment in mathematics is in line with the national average at the end of Key Stage 1 and above average at the end of Key Stage 2. Attainment of pupils of average ability is broadly in line with the national average throughout the school. However, the number of pupils attaining high levels is above average at the end of Key Stage 1 and well above average at the end of Key Stage 2. There is no measurable difference in the attainment of boys and girls. When looked at over several years, sometimes boys do better, and sometimes girls do better. Similarly, there is no difference in attainment in the different areas of the mathematics National Curriculum, though due emphasis is given to number. The school has at least maintained the good standards highlighted in the previous report.
86. At the end of Key Stage 1, all pupils measure accurately to the nearest centimetre, count to 30, and add numbers to twenty. Average attaining pupils understand tens and units and 'less than', and find the fewest coins needed to make an amount up to '1. High attaining pupils are writing good subtraction stories, work with money to '5, and know common two- and three-dimensional shapes. At the end of Key Stage 2 all pupils are working confidently with numbers up to 100,000, simple fractions, decimals and percentages. Average attaining pupils are very accurate with their number work, multiplying and dividing decimals by powers of ten. They are rounding accurately to the nearest tenth and hundredth. High attaining pupils order fractions using 'greater than' and 'less than', and succeed in quite complicated investigations in number.
87. Pupils' attainment in mathematics is below average on entry to the school. By the time they enter Key Stage 1 attainment is average. Progress in Key Stage 1 is satisfactory, and good for high attaining pupils. In Key Stage 2, progress is good overall, being satisfactory or good for lower and average attainers, and very good for high attainers, in that a large percentage, almost half, are reaching Level 5 of the National Curriculum. Progress for pupils with special educational needs is good, and almost all pupils from the main part of the school reach at least Level 3. The good progress in many areas of the school results in very good progress overall.

88. Numeracy skills are satisfactory in Key Stage 1 and good in Key Stage 2. Good use is made of these skills in other subjects, including measurement in design and technology and the use of graphs in science and geography.
89. Pupils enjoy mathematics, are well behaved, and concentrate well in lessons. They are enthusiastic about mental mathematics in particular, and upper junior pupils are very enthusiastic. Year 6 pupils actively enjoy the challenging mathematical exercises provided. The last inspection report called for the school to give more emphasis to using and applying mathematics, and this has been done well. Pupils in Year 2 are confident in coming to the front of the class to fold large sheets of sugar paper along mirror lines and explain what they are doing and why. Year 6 pupils take pleasure in explaining how they have arrived at a certain answer in finding factors and prime factors of numbers, or how and why they have decided that a number is prime. All pupils are encouraged to have mathematical facts at their fingertips, and to investigate and solve problems. This encouragement has a highly positive effect on confidence and personal development, and on attainment and progress.
90. Teaching is good throughout the school, especially so in the special educational needs unit and in Year 6, where half the teaching is very good. No teaching is less than satisfactory, and over two thirds is good or very good. Particularly good features of teaching are teachers' expectations of pupils' rates of progress, the use of resources to make understanding easier, and the use of assessment to make sure that work is well matched to pupils' potential. All these ensure good progress. Class management is good in Key Stage 1 and very good in Key Stage 2. Marking is good, and often very good, with helpful comments which record what pupils can and cannot do, and short-term targets given for individuals in exercise books. Another good feature of teaching is the enthusiastic adoption of methods of increasing pupils' mental mathematical agility from the National Numeracy Strategy. All these things are helping to raise standards.
91. The curriculum is broad and well balanced, with several commercial schemes used alongside the National Numeracy Strategy to guarantee delivery of the National Curriculum, something which could not be demonstrated at the time of the last inspection, so the school has made good progress here. Arrangements for the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy have been, and are, very effective. About a quarter of teaching time is given to mathematics. A good, comprehensive policy and scheme of work ensure good progression. Assessment is thorough, with half-termly targets for individuals and groups set according to whether pupils meet or do not meet numeracy objectives. In Key Stage 2 each year is divided into two sets, making it easier to target pupils at different levels of attainment. These two features of the school; setting and very good use of assessment, along with the good teaching, are major causes of the very good achievement of higher attainers. Management of the subject is very good. The Headteacher was co-ordinator until September 1999, when a competent and enthusiastic co-ordinator, who had already worked with the National Numeracy Strategy, was appointed to the school. Monitoring of planning, teaching and pupils' progress are very good. Resources are satisfactory, though there are no abacuses. Resources are well deployed and used effectively and, as such, aid continuity in pupils' learning.

Science

92. The 1999 teacher assessments and National Curriculum tests showed attainment in science to be above the national average for both key stages. At the end of Key Stage 1 96 per cent of pupils achieved the expected Level 2 or above and at Key Stage 2, 91 per cent of pupils achieved the expected Level 4 or above with 34 per cent achieving the higher Level 5. This compares very favourably with the results in 1998 when at Key Stage 1, only 86 per cent achieved the expected standard and at Key Stage 2, where 69 per cent reached Level 4 or above and 25 per cent Level 5. In previous years, statistics for Key Stage 2 have included those for pupils in the moderate learning difficulties unit and this has led to an unfavourable comparison with other schools. The statistics for 1999 for Key Stage 2 exclude these pupils and give a more accurate indication of the school's achievements. A comparison of results, excluding those for the moderate learning difficulties unit, from 1998 and 1999 show that standards have

risen considerably. Girls have consistently outperformed the boys over the past three years but the latest test scores indicate that the gap has closed considerably. At the time of the previous inspection, pupils had a secure knowledge of science. There has been an improvement in pupils' scientific investigational skills. These were described at the time of the last inspection as 'less secure at Level 4?', they are now average.

93. The attainment of pupils currently in both key stages is average. It reflects test data in that knowledge is good but pupils' skills are less well developed. The attainment of pupils in the moderate learning difficulties unit is well below average, but their progress is very good.
94. In 1999 when pupils in Year 6 left the school, they could plan and carry out a fair test investigating solubility and devised instructions for separating mixtures of materials. They had a good knowledge of safety and its importance in everyday life and in investigations. They used their knowledge of food chains in investigations of life in the school pond. Their knowledge of gravity and their use of Newtons as a unit of measure were secure. Much of their work was supported by material prepared by their teachers. The attainment of pupils currently in Year 6 is average. They know about food and what constitutes a healthy diet. They know about the working of muscles and the relationship with the skeleton in the human body. They carry out investigations into the effect of exercise on heart rate and breathing. They are aware of the use of drugs and know about the positive and negative use of them. There is still much reliance on teacher prepared material and whole class investigations which do little to develop independence in scientific enquiry.
95. Pupils in Year 2 carry out simple experiments and investigations, for example into how the strength of paper is affected by water. They use equipment well to support their work. They know about different materials and describe their properties accurately. They know which materials occur naturally and those which are manufactured. They collect data and record these accurately using a variety of methods, for example favourite fruits and recording using graphs and lists. They use information technology well for writing and producing graphs.
96. Progress in science at Key Stage 1 is satisfactory for all pupils including those with special educational needs. Pupils' curiosity and interest in the everyday world is stimulated through a wide variety of materials and experiences. They know and name a range of materials and have learned that the state of these can change, for example, through freezing water and making jelly. These include the good use of the school grounds and the world outside to develop their skills of observation. They learn about plants, how they grow and how they are used for foods. They collect data about favourite foods and display these accurately. Younger children learn about their senses and use them effectively in investigations into sight, hearing, touch and taste. Their knowledge of the importance of safety is enhanced by these experiences. They name some external body parts and know about how they have changed since they were babies. Attainment in investigational science is satisfactory. They make simple observations and describe the results of experiments although they do not yet provide explanations for these. They make simple predictions prior to carrying out an investigation and are aware that these predictions may not be borne out by the results.
97. Satisfactory progress is being made by pupils in Key Stage 2. Progress is good in the acquisition of knowledge but only satisfactory in the development of investigational skills. They know about circuits and give reasons for failures of bulbs to light. They know about insulators and conductors, carrying out simple investigations to identify which materials are best to carry out these functions. Their knowledge of safety is enhanced by this activity and they identify areas in their own houses where insulators are used. They know about habitats and use simple keys for classification of animals using identifiable external features for example legs, shell and wings. Older pupils know about gases and the constitution of the air around us. They make links to smells and perfumes using their knowledge of molecules well. They know about the states of matter and identify use of materials through a consideration of their state, for example the use of solids in rigid structures. Their investigations include consideration of absorbency of sponges and rates of evaporation of water. They make predictions and include some elements of fair testing but the over use of class work and worksheets is hindering the development of independence of

pupils to determine their own way of working and presenting data.

98. Pupils in the moderate learning difficulties unit are making very good progress in their science. They know about light and how it causes shadows. They carry out investigations into shadows and explore the effects of colour on the appearance of the shadow.
99. All pupils are interested in and excited by their work in science. They listen carefully, respond positively and are keen to work together and share ideas in investigations. They are well behaved and treat equipment with care. Their work is usually completed neatly and tidily with results of observations and investigations recorded accurately. Only rarely is the response of the pupils unsatisfactory. When this happens they are not sufficiently engaged in the task, are noisy and wander about the room. This attitude leads to limited progress in science. In the moderate learning difficulties unit the response of the pupils is very good, and sometimes excellent. The pupils cling to every word from their teacher, they are keen and eager to learn and totally engaged in the tasks.
100. The quality of teaching is good overall, and never less than satisfactory. Over 60 per cent of lessons are good or better, with about 20 per cent very good or better. Two excellent lessons were observed, one in Key Stage 1 and one in the special educational needs unit. All lessons are well planned and prepared and clearly based on the newly formulated scheme of work. Teaching is most successful when questions are used well to challenge and guide the pupils' learning. The intended learning is clearly identified and outcomes shared with the pupils, the work clearly builds on previous learning and is related to everyday experiences. Good use is made of pupils' responses, for example, in the loss of a tooth and the identification of insulators in the home. Teachers' subject knowledge and their management of pupils are good, they use group work effectively and encourage pupils to help one another. The pace of lessons is good with pupils actively involved. Good use is made of resources, accommodation and additional help provided by other adults.
101. Teaching is less successful when challenge is limited and opportunities are not fully explored. Pupils are insufficiently involved through too much time being spent on instructions, not all being involved in the investigation and too much support given. Expectations in terms of time and completion of task are not clear and negative attitudes of pupils are allowed to hinder their progress. The marking of books is positive, up to date, provides comment and encouragement. The best examples provide targets and pose questions to stimulate future work. The display of pupils' work around the school is good and celebrates their work and success.
102. There is a very good policy for the teaching of science. The scheme of work is based on national guidelines, is well matched to the school's overall curricular plans and provides the basis for a broad and balanced curriculum. The establishment of a scheme satisfies the recommendation made in the previous inspection and is having a positive effect in raising standards. The scheme gives good support to the teaching of science knowledge and includes some development of skills but further planning is needed in order to ensure their systematic development. The cross-referencing of the new scheme to the National Curriculum is not always clear. Sufficient time is allocated for the teaching of the subject. Teachers carry out effective assessments during the lessons and at specific points in the term. The information gained from these assessments is used well to check progress and to plan future work. Reports to parents provide information on levels of attainment and comment on attitudes to work. Science makes a good contribution to the pupils' social development through working together and supporting one another and to their moral development through consideration of drugs. The co-ordinator provides very good leadership, she is well qualified and very experienced in the teaching of the subject. Good support is given and the subject is carefully monitored through teaching and regular checks of the pupils' progress. Plans for the subject are clearly matched to the school's aims and overall commitment to achieving high standards. Resources available for the subject are satisfactory and used well. Good use is made of the school grounds and visits to the local area. The subject makes a good contribution to literacy through speaking and listening and report writing, and a satisfactory contribution to mathematics through the application of data display skills in graphs and charts. The main target for development is the clear identification and development of investigational skills throughout the school.

OTHER SUBJECTS

Information technology

103. In the last report, pupils' levels of attainment in information technology were reported as being never better than satisfactory and frequently unsatisfactory. The school has made a considerable investment in software and hardware to support the subject. This provision, combined with a new curriculum and a commitment to raise standards, has resulted in all pupils achieving good levels of attainment which are above those expected nationally at the end of each key stage. Skills are now systematically developed and used effectively in other areas of the school curriculum.
104. Pupils who left the school in 1999 could use information technology effectively in a variety of contexts. They used word processing skills in their work in English downloading information and incorporating it into their work in geography and history. They used the Internet effectively to communicate through electronic mail with pupils in other schools in this country and overseas. They designed their own school web site, and used others and CD-ROMs well to gain information on a variety of topics. They could use technology to monitor and measure conditions in the environment, for example temperatures.
105. Currently pupils in Year 2 use computers confidently and use their word processing skills in their work on stories and labels in the classroom. They save and retrieve their work successfully. They use a variety of programs to support their work in other subjects, for example, to draw and paint to create portraits. They are also beginning to combine instructions for a programmable toy into a series to make it travel a pre-determined path. Other pupils in Key Stage 1, including those with special educational needs, are making good progress. They are developing their keyboard skills well, using the mouse, saving and retrieving their work successfully. They use other graphics programs to produce maps and graphs to support their work in mathematics. They use simple instructions to control a programmable toy in movements in single directions. The tape players and headphones are used well by the pupils when they are listening to stories.
106. Pupils in Year 6 are building on a firm foundation and attaining at least good, with some very good levels of attainment. They are using the Internet well to communicate with pupils in other schools and for information, for example, for their work on Hinduism. All pupils in Key Stage 2, including those with special educational needs, are making good progress. They are using their keyboard skills and mouse control well to save and retrieve work and to amend and present their ideas. They find, load and incorporate information and pictures into their work, for example for work on life in the trenches. Pupils in Years 4 and 5 create symmetrical patterns in mathematics and design rooms for work in design and technology. Year 5 pupils use the Internet successfully and interrogate sites for information about local facilities, for example leisure facilities for young people in Macclesfield. Pupils in the moderate learning difficulties unit are making very good progress. Their curriculum is clearly structured and is having a positive effect on their progress.
107. All pupils are enthusiastic about the subject and frequently continue their work at home. They are eager to use computers and treat the equipment with care. They respond well, listen carefully to instructions and carry out their tasks with confidence. They share ideas, help each other and take turns sensibly. They support each other well and provide help and encouragement when needed. Only one lesson was seen during the inspection when this positive attitude was not apparent. Pupils were noisy and off task. They did not complete the task expected and made little progress in their work.
108. Teaching is good. It was good or better in over 87 per cent of the lessons observed, with half lessons being very good. The previous inspection reported that teaching was generally unsatisfactory.

Considerable improvement has been made because of the commitment of staff to improve standards. The high level of resourcing for, and very good support given to, the subject have also contributed to this improvement. Teaching is now rarely unsatisfactory. In the best lessons, planning is good and clearly builds on previous learning. There is a high level of challenge and expectation. Pupils' ideas are used constructively and their activity purposeful. Teachers' subject knowledge is secure and they show genuine enthusiasm for their work. They make good use of the computers and of the other adults in the classroom. Where teaching is less successful, particularly in Key Stage 2, there is a lack of clear learning goals. Pupils are not given clear targets and there is no expectation to complete their work. The pace is slow and the pupils are not kept on task.

109. Time allocation for the subject is appropriate. Specific times are identified for teaching skills and there are many opportunities for applying them in other areas of the curriculum. The information technology programme is well structured and identifies clear progression in the development of skills. Assessment is clearly included in the planning for information technology. It is used well in most lessons and enables teachers to track pupils' progress and make provision for future work. The use of assessment is not yet consistent in all classes. Information technology makes a good contribution to pupils' social development through sharing equipment and helping others. The two co-ordinators provide good support and monitor the curriculum although there is no time specifically identified for this. They are fully involved in the planning and the development of the subject. The support provided, teaching and high level of resourcing are having a very positive effect on raising standards. The school has an impressive range of resources to support the teaching of information technology. The two computer suites and the computers in the classrooms are well used. The location of one computer suite in a corridor does occasionally cause difficulties in monitoring pupils as they work, although staff make every effort to overcome this through the use of additional adult help. The resources are deployed and managed very well. Provision is making a very positive contribution to raising standards throughout the school.

Religious education

110. Attainment at the end of both key stages is above the level expected in the Locally Agreed Syllabus, and at least as good as that described in the previous inspection report. By the end of Key Stage 1, most pupils recognise that churches are places of worship. They know that Muslims worship in mosques which are a different shape from churches. They name Jesus as a Christian leader, but recognise that other world faiths have different leaders and founders, such as Allah. They know that the church is important for Christians and is a place where people get married, or are christened whereas mosques are important to Muslims. They have learnt the story of Moses in Egypt and correctly identify all the plagues, and put them in order. They enjoy drawing illustrations of the plagues and make good use of the literacy skills in writing captions and sentences about their pictures. The youngest pupils are beginning to recall the story of the nativity; they know the names of the presents brought by the three kings, whose names they also remember.
111. By the end of Key Stage 2, most pupils' knowledge of Christianity is secure. They recount stories from the Old and New Testaments. They recall the main features of their local church, such as steeple, font or pulpit. They re-tell the story of the Annunciation, showing an understanding of those times. Their understanding of other world faiths is good. For instance, in studying Hinduism most pupils recognise the difference between mehndi and rangoli patterns. They are beginning to identify similarities and differences of world faiths and Christianity. For instance, they discuss the differences and similarities between a Jewish sabbath and a Christian one. They use appropriate vocabulary properly and with respect, for example, menorah and hanukkah. In discussion, most pupils recognise that Britain is a multi-faith society and that it is necessary to develop positive qualities of respect and tolerance through an understanding of others' beliefs and traditions.
112. Good progress in Key Stage 1 is promoted by good teaching. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils are developing their knowledge and understanding of other world faiths, such as Islam. For example, they have opportunities to acquire knowledge about how Muslims are called to prayer by the muezzin from

the minaret. They look closely at real Eid cards, and design their own with care, drawing a mosque with accuracy. They know that the cards should open differently from our greeting cards and make their Eid cards accordingly. In their past work, pupils show that they have studied characters from the Bible, such as David or Zacchaeus and have written brief character descriptions, for example 'I think Zacchaeus was a mean man'. They describe accurately what the plagues were like and why God sent them. They know that Moses was a leader who wanted to leave Egypt. Most pupils are gaining an awareness of the importance of religion in people's lives. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, participate in discussions with interest. They ask pertinent questions such as 'Why are there so many names for God'?

113. In Key Stage 2, good progress is promoted by good teaching. After listening attentively to the story of the Annunciation pupils take part in a lively discussion, gaining an understanding of everyday life in the times of Jesus. In a lesson about Judaism, all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in their knowledge and understanding of the Jewish festival of Hanukkah. They use their knowledge to design suitable greeting cards. From looking at their past work, and from discussion, it is clear that pupils have made good progress in gaining an understanding of how other people worship. They have visited the Jewish museum and seen for themselves the inside of a synagogue, together with the special artefacts revered by Jews. Pupils enjoy discussions, and willingly offer their opinions, for example having watched a video-recording of a Jewish shabbat, they discuss some of the events they saw and begin to distinguish between the shabbat and the Christian sabbath. By the end of the key stage, pupils are eager to discuss differences in world faiths and to draw up a list of questions they will pose to a Hindu visitor, such as 'Have you got a special book like our Bible'? They enjoy looking at Hindu artefacts such as prayer beads, oil lamps and deities such as Shiva. They discuss which items they would put in a Christian 'time capsule' to send out into space: a Bible, for example, or a crucifix.
114. Attitudes to learning about religious education are very positive. At Key Stage 1 response is very good. Pupils generally behave very well, take a keen interest, and take a full and active part in lessons. The youngest pupils discuss what the three wise men will wear and what the shepherds were doing out so late at night. In Year 1, having enjoyed the story of Moses in Egypt, they quickly settle to their tasks of drawing and writing about the plagues. Year 2 pupils enjoy designing and making cards to celebrate the end of Ramadan. They concentrate well, and take pride in their cards. They draw upon the skills they have acquired in literacy and in design and technology: lettering and measuring.
115. In Key Stage 2, pupils' attitudes are good overall. Sometimes their response is very good. For example, they enjoy the challenge of writing the Annunciation as a playscript, bringing to bear their writing skills acquired in literacy. Their attitudes to this challenging task are very good. They are eager to explore ways of portraying character effectively, and decide that God cannot be an actor in their play since no-one knows what God looks like. They are determined to sort out problems like this and take turns in suggesting solutions. Eventually they decide that God will be represented by a booming voice coming from inside a cupboard. They use specific terms such as 'setting', 'character' and 'scene'. Pupils are eager to learn about the Jewish customs attached to shabbat and the festival of Hanukkah. They take pride in their cards and set up a good display to show their work. In the times set aside for quiet reflection, pupils have suitably respectful attitudes. For instance, in a class assembly they join in singing 'Shalom' and sit quietly during a prayer, showing appropriate respect. These opportunities are important aspects of personal and cultural development in both key stages. Generally, they respond well to questioning, and listen attentively. Behaviour in both key stages is generally good.
116. Teaching in religious education is good in both key stages, and occasionally very good. Teaching is very good where the pace of the lesson is crisp and pupils' interest is captured, for example in involving drama or in using artefacts. Planning is very effective, matching the requirements of the school's scheme which in turn is written in accordance with the Locally Agreed Syllabus. Teachers have high expectations, and present their lessons imaginatively, for example, in using the story of the Annunciation as the basis for a playscript, in using actual greeting cards or in devising a 'time capsule' to capture and engage pupils' attention fully. Good use of religious artefacts, visits and visitors serve to stimulate

interest and promote understanding. Subject knowledge is very good, and teachers take care to link their lessons with past work. Teachers manage behaviour well, as they take the opportunity to promote social and personal development in religious education lessons. For example, in discussions they insist on the social convention of one pupil speaking at a time, of showing respect towards each other, and of being respectful of religious artefacts such as the Qur'an. Provision for cultural development is interwoven in religious education lessons as pupils are being encouraged to understand the views, practices and opinions of others in the wider world beyond school. From time to time, the school invites speakers to assist in lessons and assemblies; this practice has a positive effect on progress.

117. Since the last inspection, the curriculum for religious education has been considerably improved and artefacts have been obtained to support teachers' lessons. However, these are still too few to support the work of a school this size, and some of the artefacts are too small for large groups to see in sufficient detail. The co-ordinator has devised very good assessment systems which are newly in place. She will attend an assessment course next term and intends to implement a new system which will be of more assistance to teachers' planning.

Art

118. Progress of all pupils throughout the school is good. Pupils develop valuable basic skills in colour mixing, line drawing and various forms of collage and textural work at an early stage. Pupils study an increasingly wide range of well-known artists, and apply the skills to their own work. Since the previous inspection the school has moved from topic based teaching to teaching art as a discrete subject. Teaching is good in both key stages, and promotes good progress.
119. Teachers plan their lessons well and ensure that the materials they and the pupils need are to hand. They focus well on particular techniques. The depth of the teacher's subject knowledge enabled Year 2 pupils to complete their project on thumb pots, observing all the stages from preparing the clay, firing, and glazing. They expanded their knowledge of the glazing process and practised the skill of reproducing Muslim decorative patterns. Pupils are good at observational drawing because they are taught how to observe closely, and how to use pencil effects from the earliest years. Strong encouragement and praise gives pupils in Year 3 confidence to tackle the fine detail like that of the local artist Bill Geldart. Good teaching is characterised by a particularly clear set of objectives, where teachers have in mind what pupils will know, understand and be able to do at the end of the lesson or topic. Well planned and resourced longer projects enable Year 6 pupils to extend and widen their skills, using their good quality field sketches of buildings in Eyam to expand in scale and as a basis for experiment with different media, to culminate in the creation of glazed tiles.
120. Art skills are used to good effect in science where technical drawings, for example, of botanical specimens, aid both the process of recording and understanding. In literacy, art skills are used to accompany text appropriately as illustrations for pupils' writing. There are very few examples, on worksheets or in books, of drawing or colouring in which does not have a particular relevance to some subject. For example, Year 5 pupils used particularly close observation of Lowry's style and characters and, by practice, learned to transfer the detail to their sketch books by careful pencil drawing and colour wash. In the process they enhanced their experience and understanding of urban culture in pre-war Britain.
121. The scheme of work makes a sound base for literacy with word lists for each year. The level of vocabulary in these lists is not always sufficiently challenging. Pupils write well about the life and times of artists, but less frequently express their opinions and feelings about works of art. Numeracy is often planned specifically into lessons, to develop pupils' awareness of shape, space and scale. Pupils' response is very positive. The quality of learning is good, characterised by careful listening to instructions and often intense concentration, with independence in following individual lines of experiment. Pupils with special educational needs work as well as, and often to as good a standard as, mainstream pupils. The profile of information technology within art has been raised significantly since the previous inspection.

122. Strong, enthusiastic management has created a clear vision for art education. The guidance provided helps teachers in the planning of art skills as a sequence of steps to be learned, and also where to apply the skills within the planning of other subjects. Provision for this subject includes a good focus on three-dimensional art. There is good equality of access for boys and girls. The new, formal assessment procedures will record pupils' attainment at different stages, to inform reports to parents and pass on information to the following year. It is the first step in a series of measures to track progress leading to pupils' self-evaluation of their work. The high quality of display throughout the school has been maintained from the last inspection.

Design and technology

123. The school has resolved the weaknesses identified in the previous inspection by determined action planning, improving teachers' subject expertise and significantly upgrading the necessary resources. Progress of all pupils is good in both key stages. Through Key Stage 1, pupils develop sound basic skills in planning the design, in making the article and in testing and evaluating. During Key Stage 2, the range of skills extends as pupils move through the school. Pupils use increasingly demanding materials and tools. The labelled diagrams and simple descriptions of their projects in Year 2, become detailed working drawings and quite sophisticated evaluations by the end of Year 6, and in each year reflects the strong links with literacy. Numeracy opportunities occur in the recognition of shape and proportion, and later in precise measurement and the need for accurate angles.
124. The revised, comprehensive scheme of work, based on national guidelines, sets out a balanced and structured programme of study, to enable teachers to plan the sequence of steps by which pupils are to progress. A valuable feature is the inclusion of training in the safe handling of a good range of increasingly more challenging tools. Most projects are open-ended allowing the higher attaining pupils a good level of challenge. Pupils with special educational needs benefit from tasks which are very well matched to their abilities. They work as well as, and at times to a better standard than, their peers. The strong focus on structures and mechanics for older pupils promotes good cross-curricular links with numeracy and science, while still maintaining an appropriate development of work with food and textiles. Year 6 pupils, for instance, extended their scientific knowledge by observing at first hand the effect of friction influencing the performance of the buggies they had made. Topics usually begin with an effective, detailed investigation of the commercial versions of the items which the pupils will make.
125. Response in both key stages is good. A particular feature is the good attention to detail and quality of finish which reflects the pupils' pride in their work. Pupils work eagerly in technology lessons, which give them independence in selecting materials and procedures.
126. The quality of teaching in both key stages is good overall. A common feature of all lessons is very good planning and preparation of materials. This enables lessons to proceed smoothly and encourages pupils to concentrate well on their work. A good programme of in-service training has raised expertise, teachers are more confident with the subject, and are able to tackle a wider range of activities. The thorough planning for lessons includes lists of tools and materials which are needed and teachers ensure that these are ready, ensuring a quick start to activities and an efficient use of time. Technical vocabulary is introduced but not sufficiently extended. About 25 per cent of lessons are satisfactory, but do not promote the same good level of progress. These lessons display a confusion of objectives, so that pupils do not know exactly what they have to do, or why. Teachers do not have the same expectation of high quality finish or behaviour and lack a consistent strategy for management of pupils. The lesson structure is unbalanced with insufficient time for a reinforcing concluding session. A similar proportion of very good lessons achieves very good progress, by setting challenging activities, putting pupils in situations where they have to think hard to solve problems encountered in construction. By being kept closely to their design brief Year 2 pupils consolidated the ideas of a material's fitness for the purpose of a strong glove puppet, yet decorative enough to attract the users. Year 4 pupils, encouraged to be independent and trust their own judgements, extended a wide range of ideas of how to set out a pop-up book from cover to cover. In the process they used many literacy skills to good effect. These included the effect of lay-out of

text, imaginative illustration, as well as techniques for moving parts, and the inclusion of computer generated features. Information technology is being used well for many design projects.

127. Good management has achieved as secure place for design and technology within the curriculum. A useful portfolio of photographs and samples of work testifies to the good quality of provision in the subject. This would be a stronger record if combined with the matching planning. Topics are carried out fully. An effective assessment formula, incorporating both teachers' and pupils' evaluations, is ready to replace the present mixed arrangement. There is good equality of access for boys and girls, and they work together co-operatively when in mixed groups.

Geography

128. Although geography is taught in blocks alternating with history, lessons were seen in all year groups except Year 1 during the inspection. Additional evidence was gathered from teachers' planning, scrutiny of pupils' work, including work on display, from photographs and in discussions.
129. In Key Stage 1, pupils describe their journey to school, decide and follow routes around a plan of the school, draw maps to represent their route and identify where specific features are located. They know the main features of their local environment and apply their knowledge to the study of distant places. They use a map of the island of Struay in Scotland to plan excursions to different parts of the island. They identify geographical features, such as the coastline, beach, cliff, hills, valleys and mountains, and make very good drawings to indicate their good level of understanding. They make comparisons between the physical and human geography of their own environment and the island of Struay before using the computer to design and print their ideal village. In Key Stage 2, pupils study their local town of Macclesfield and suggest ways in which its environment might be improved. They become involved in the issue of the day, deciding whether the market should be returned to its original place in the town centre. In this connection, Year 3 pupils discuss the advantages and disadvantages before writing individual letters to the council. Year 4 pupils' educational visit to the River Bollin provides opportunities for investigative geography as pupils measure the level of pollution using different criteria and extend their learning when they visit the North West Water Centre and conduct experiments filtering water. They learn, understand and apply vocabulary related to rivers including source, tributary, confluence, mouth, basin, and watershed and demonstrate their understanding through the detailed display mounted in the school corridor. By the end of the key stage, pupils in Year 6 conduct an integrated study of Eyam village using skills developed in previous years to give a clear picture of the village indicating the influence of historical events on the present landscape. They make reference to physical and human geography, the importance of limestone features on drainage, the woodland and the changing nature of land use and human activity through time.
130. In both key stages, pupils make good progress in the study of geography gaining increased knowledge and understanding of the subject. In upper Key Stage 2, pupils apply the skills gained in previous years on local studies to the study of environmental protection, particularly from pollution. They develop awareness of environmental problems affecting countries when dealing with how and why people seek to manage the environment with reference to road construction, airports, energy production and supply and the conflicts arising from conservation. They apply their knowledge of weather conditions at home to other areas of the world. The foundation laid in map work skills from Reception onwards is developed with a level of sophistication to enable pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 to use maps effectively to illustrate the main features of a locality. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress as indicated by the high quality of displays on buildings in Macclesfield.
131. Pupils have a good attitude to the subject and enjoy their lessons especially when they use maps and atlases or engage in other practical activities. In Key Stage 1, pupils show enthusiasm for participating in the travels of Barnaby Bear. They send postcards from their holiday destinations and produce scrapbooks of high quality for display in the school corridor. Older pupils ask searching questions about how best to meet the needs of the whole community in their survey of amenities for young people in Macclesfield. Year 1 and 2 pupils take pride in drawing maps of their journey to school and to demonstrate knowledge

of their home address. Pupils are keen to share their experiences of travel abroad when appropriate to the lesson content. They are highly motivated remaining on task throughout as was seen in a Year 2 lesson, planning routes round the island of Struay. They work independently and apply their learning in a practical way, for example deciding to take steps to conserve water at home, and to consider the benefits of recycling materials. Pupils with special educational needs show increased interest when working on practical activities.

132. The quality of teaching is good overall and sometimes very good. None is less than satisfactory. This is an improvement on the last inspection when it was reported that unsatisfactory teaching occurred on rare occasions. In the best lessons teachers have a very good grasp of the subject. They have high expectations of the pupils and ask very challenging questions and above all they show enthusiasm for the subject, to which the pupils respond appropriately. Good relationships between teacher and pupils help to achieve a good working atmosphere in the classroom. Where teaching is less than good, most often in Key Stage 2, there is a lack of confidence and sparkle to tap the enthusiasm of the pupils.
133. The work in geography is enhanced by a number of educational visits including trips to Styal village and a day to the coast at Llandudno where pupils examined the contrasts between inland and coastal locations. Older Key Stage 2 pupils benefit from visits to Eyam village where they examine the link between geographical and historical information. A visit to Chester Zoo increased their understanding of how animals adapt to a different climatic environment. These help to maintain a keen interest in the subject. The subject clearly has an important place in the school's curriculum and is ably managed by a co-ordinator for each of the two key stages. Planning for continuity and progress is well developed, helped by a carefully planned scheme of work and effective monitoring. This is an improvement since the last inspection when it was reported that the absence of an up-to-date policy and scheme of work meant that some aspects of the National Curriculum received insufficient attention. Pupils' work is assessed effectively and records kept. Although resources are satisfactory for the delivery of the curriculum there is now scope for expanding software provision for use with the computer and to extend the use of literacy, numeracy and science in geography.

History

134. History is taught in blocks alternating with geography so that during the inspection no lessons were observed in Years 3, 4 and 6. Judgements are therefore based additionally on scrutiny of pupils' work, displays, discussions with staff and pupils and the scrutiny of documentation.
135. In Key Stage 1, pupils demonstrate a very clear understanding of past and present when comparing old and new. They analyse how members of the family have changed with the passing of time, design questionnaires for parents and grandparents about what their school was like, and discuss how the toys they use change as they get older. They develop their awareness of chronology using artefacts, pictures of the past and stories about life in other times. They make detailed studies of the life and times of Florence Nightingale, prepare questions for their invited guest, a qualified nurse, and show great enthusiasm in answering questions on the return visit. Pupils acquire skills of enquiry by finding out about the local hospital and making comparisons with the hospital at Scutari. They learn about the Crimean War and understand the problems which Florence Nightingale encountered on her mission, because of different attitudes in the past. They note how things are different now.
136. In Key Stage 2, pupils learn about the Roman Empire and its impact on life in England and especially the evidence remaining in the landscape to remind us of the past. They understand the importance of archaeology in the reconstruction of the past and learn about Roman mosaics, the life of a Roman soldier and the differing roles of men and women in those times. They know that there are many myths and legends derived from Ancient Greece and they understand that some aspects of our culture derive from Greek civilisation, including the origin of the Olympic games, contributions to science, mathematics, language and architecture. Cross-curricular links are forged when they make a combined study of the geography and history of Eyam village in Derbyshire focussing on the impact of the plague on the village in 1665, and the evidence which remains today. They make use of the computer to obtain additional

information and to present their work and thus enhance their learning. By the end of the key stage, pupils understand how homes and buildings have changed through the ages and compare Tudor buildings, such as Little Moreton Hall, with homes of today. They make detailed studies of the life and works of William Shakespeare and know that the role and power of the monarchy differ considerably from today. Year 6 pupils know the main changes in Britain since 1930 and extend their understanding of conditions during the war by their visit to an air raid shelter. They begin to develop their own research skills to find out about topics in history, from books, videos, artefacts and by asking questions. These results represent an improvement on the last inspection when the majority of pupils were achieving appropriate levels for their ability and a small number of pupils at Key Stage 2 had a less secure grasp of some historical concepts. History is accorded an important place in the school curriculum and much is achieved by the school in spite of the reduced curriculum.

137. In both key stages, pupils make good progress, because of interesting topics and good teaching. From the study of toys in the early years pupils progress to analysing the reasons for differences between the past and the present and to empathise with those who endured difficult circumstances. They ask questions and show a high level of motivation when a visitor describes her experiences working in a hospital, explaining reasons why some things are different but others remain the same. They develop confidence in making contributions as they build up their vocabulary of historical terms. In Year 3, pupils use descriptive information whereas in Year 6 pupils acknowledge the work of Eratosthenes, Hippocrates and Archimedes. They make reasoned comments about moral issues, such as the return of the Elgin marbles. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in learning, especially when visiting museums and places of historical interest. As they grow older they become more confident in contributing to discussions.
138. Pupils enjoy history especially when lessons are supported by educational visits. They show curiosity about the past and are fascinated by accounts of other people's experiences. They show respect for property and handle artefacts with care. They listen attentively during lessons and are well behaved on educational visits. They develop independent study skills when researching topics in history. Relationships with their class teacher and with one another during lessons are good.
139. Teaching at both key stages is good. Teachers have very good knowledge and understanding of the subject and in Key Stage 1 teachers show enthusiasm for teaching history through hands on experience. Work is well planned across year groups and good use is made of visits to museums and places of historical interest. This is a strength in the teaching of the subject. Key Stage 1 pupils visit Quarry Bank Mill at Styal where they experience life as a child worker in Victorian times, doing carding, spinning and weaving of wool. Year 4 pupils visit Manchester Museum to further their studies of Ancient Egypt, and Year 3 pupils examine Roman artefacts in the Chester Museum combined with their examination of Roman remains in the city. These educational visits help pupils to make progress in their learning and contribute positively to the standards attained.
140. The management of the subject is effective. The co-ordinator has a clear vision for the subject and is dedicated to the task. There is a clear policy and a scheme of work which help to ensure progression. Monitoring is done through involvement with planning across year groups but there is, as yet, a lack of opportunities to monitor teaching to ensure consistency across the subject and the spread of good practice. There are good procedures for assessing pupils' progress and pupils do self-evaluation of the work they cover. Results are used to guide planning. There is substantial evidence of work of a high standard done by pupils in history. There are adequate resources for the delivery of the curriculum. These include artefacts, photographs, posters, videos and teaching packs on particular topics. There is scope for the acquisition of computer software to support the teaching of history. The subject makes an important contribution to the social, moral and cultural development of the pupils in the school.

Music

141. Pupils are making satisfactory progress in Key Stages 1 and 2. Pupils with special educational needs who are taught in the special educational needs unit are making very good progress. There has been an improvement since the previous inspection when teaching was 'generally sound' and there was 'some under-achievement in approximately one third of lessons'.
142. During Key Stage 1, most pupils are beginning to sing in tune, memorising the words of songs. At this stage in the school year they are studying the elements of music. For instance, they study how high or how low a sound is. They try to differentiate high and low by listening carefully to two sounds before sorting sounds into two sets: high sounds or low sounds. Discussing and studying a seascape, pupils decide where a wave is high and where it is low; they fix illustrations of a bird and a fish in the correct place on the seascape. Singing a song about a bird and a fish helps them further in their understanding of high and low sound. Using a glockenspiel they begin to understand the connection between the length of a bar and its sound: the longer bars make the lower sounds, and vice versa. Good links with science are made as pupils recall how animals move and where they live. By the end of the key stage, they are beginning to link symbols with high and low sounds as they hum high, low and medium sounds following a 'conductor'. Good links are made with physical education as they recall moving close to the floor, or stretching up into the air. They are beginning to organise a series of sounds using coloured symbols on a whiteboard in readiness for reading graphic scores. They recognise that music sometimes involves silences, and control their sounds accurately, stopping promptly at a signal. In assemblies, they are given opportunities to develop their listening skills when recorded music is played whilst they come into or leave the hall. In Year 2, pupils have the chance to practise their listening skills still further. Their experience of music from long ago is enriched as they listened to a Beethoven symphony whilst drawing Eid greetings cards.
143. In Key Stage 2, all pupils in Year 3 have the opportunity to learn to play the recorder. They are beginning to understand the conventions of reading standard music notation, and to appreciate that some sounds are longer than others. Although they sing regularly in assemblies, and in singing lessons, their vocal techniques are not yet fully developed and there is some lack of confidence. However, sometimes they sing long notes and generally they sing in tune. In assemblies, they are being provided with opportunities to listen to recorded music and are beginning to gain an understanding of music of different times and cultures. By the end of the key stage pupils read the words as they sing a medley of Beatles' songs.
144. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress in identifying and distinguishing high and low sounds. They enjoy practising their sounds, take turns and show appreciation of others' efforts. They concentrate well and are willing to persevere and improve their accuracy. At the end of their lesson they are eager to perform a song from 'The Wizard of Oz'. Their singing is strong, confident and enthusiastic.
145. Pupils' attitudes to music throughout the school are generally good. They are more confident when they are sure of the words of their songs, and then they become more enthusiastic and animated. On the whole they listen attentively to instructions and explanations. As the school was preparing for Christmas, no group work was observed during the inspection, nor were any pupils working on composing using a range of instruments.
146. Teaching is nearly always good. Occasionally it is of a satisfactory standard. The quality is good when teachers have more musical expertise and knowledge, and they possess the skills to support their pupils more confidently. For example, teachers use their singing voices well. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is very good: there is a strong sense of purpose, good pace and a sense of fun is generated. Teachers are following the school's scheme of work closely in organising classwork. Individual lessons are well-planned. The scheme ensures consistency between parallel classes, and continuity between year groups. A system for assessing pupils' achievements is in place but is not yet in full use. However, opportunities for enriching pupils' knowledge and understanding of music of good quality are not always being seized; pupils are not getting enough opportunities to develop their listening skills in music. The Headteacher makes a significant and valuable contribution to music in the school as

she teaches many lessons and leads rehearsals for forthcoming Christmas productions. Her expertise is supported by visiting accompanists.

147. Pupils paying for their own lessons have the chance to play a range of orchestral instruments. A very good feature of music in the school is the contribution to assembly made by an ensemble of instruments comprising a violin and descant, treble and tenor recorders. Their music is specially arranged to account for the combination of instruments available, and the abilities of the players. The players read conventional musical notation in four parts. They hold their own line well, whilst listening to others playing theirs. The standard of playing is high; the instruments are well-balanced and the ensemble produces a delicate, almost ethereal, quality of sound.

Physical education

148. Pupils' work in physical education is similar to that reported in the previous inspection, although strength and stamina are not emphasised enough in lessons. Progress is satisfactory throughout the school, and good in dance. Progress is very good for pupils in the special educational needs unit, given the difficulties faced by these pupils. Most pupils in the school can swim 25 metres unaided by the end of Year 4, and all pupils by the end of Key Stage 2.
149. Attitudes and behaviour are generally good. Pupils get changed quickly and walk to and from the hall sensibly in silence. A large majority listen to instructions carefully and follow them as well as they can. When they are given good examples of what to do, for example in a Key Stage 1 dance class given by a talented teacher, they respond appropriately and with some skill. Pupils in the special educational needs unit experience a very good programme of physical development, including swimming and riding, and enthusiastic and dedicated teaching. They respond well, and enjoy their successes.
150. Teaching is satisfactory overall, with some good teaching in dance and gymnastics, although some gymnastics lessons are rather uninspiring in their content. Examples of good teaching occur in both key stages and is often linked to enthusiastic demonstration by the teacher, and high expectations of skill, effort, challenge, pace and behaviour. Pupils respond appropriately and make good progress. If any of these elements is missing, lessons are satisfactory, but do not extend pupils sufficiently.
151. The demands of the National Curriculum in relation to swimming are met. A good policy and helpful scheme support the subject satisfactorily. The curriculum is well supported by ten extra-curricular sports clubs, from which the school fields competitive teams in football, netball, hockey, cricket, rounders and swimming. Resources are good, but access is restricted as there is no outside door on the storage area. The hall is too small for gymnastics in the upper juniors. Although this does not interfere with delivery of the National Curriculum, teachers and pupils have to be very careful in order to remain safe.

The Unit for pupils with moderate learning difficulties

152. The unit accommodates 15 pupils with moderate learning difficulties from schools throughout the Local Education Authority area. Liaison with those schools to assess and identify those pupils who will benefit most from this provision is very good, as are links with the parents and carers. The number has been significantly reduced since the previous inspection, largely because of the national initiative to promote greater inclusion of such pupils in mainstream schools.
153. The unit is a centre of excellence. Teaching is very good, at times excellent. The organisation and structure of the sessions are excellent, creating conditions where pupils are secure and know precisely what they have to do to improve their basic skills. The very comprehensive planning links very closely the pupils' individual targets to the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and to subject programmes of study objectives. Continuous and precise assessment of pupils' progress in skills is effectively used to adjust the work planned from day-to-day. The programmes of work set are personal, relevant, varied and attractive, matching the resources which are well used within them. Relationships are

excellent, maintaining pupils' positive self-image at all times, creating conditions where pupils can work with good concentration and determination. The complex timetable, which this involves, runs smoothly because of the particularly close teamwork of the two teachers and their assistants.

154. Teaching strategies are based on short lesson slots where pupils maximise their concentration spans and experience many 'fresh starts' during the day. The ethos of the Unit is to enable the pupils to experience success, but this does not mean that they are spoon-fed. They are often put into challenging situations, be it mastering new spellings, constructing Wizard of Oz figures or imagining delving into deep mines, where their problem solving capacities are stretched to the limit. The curriculum, while appropriately modified in some aspects, is wider than that of the mainstream. It includes horse-riding and a good range of visits to places of stimulating educational value, including at least one residential visit. Overall it promotes very good progress in relation to the pupils' abilities. A sensitive pattern of integration allows pupils to join the mainstream activities at appropriate points.
155. Excellent management of the unit includes a strong programme of review and self-evaluation, identifying the need to introduce elements of greater independence for pupils' working, appropriate to their capacities. Very good administration of the comprehensive procedures and records, and audit and provision of resources has a strong positive impact of the quality of education provided.

PART C: INSPECTION DATA

SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE

156. The inspection of Ivy Bank Primary School was undertaken by seven inspectors who spent a total of 26 inspector days in the school. The evidence in the report is based upon a total of 86.75 hours observation from 138 lessons or part lessons distributed across the 15 classes, together with 34.2 hours of other direct observation activities.
157. The evidence also includes:
- C. inspection of a range of other school activities, including assemblies and registration;
 - C. listening to the reading of pupils from each year group, selected by teachers to represent the full range of ability and attainment;
 - C. inspection of books and other work of three pupils in each age group, in each class, selected by teachers to represent the full range of attainment;
 - C. inspection of samples of work from the previous academic year;
 - C. inspection of samples of written reports to parents;
 - C. discussions with children in each age group;
 - C. discussions with governors, parents, members of teaching, learning support and non-teaching staff;
 - C. discussions held at a meeting, prior to the inspection, attended by 13 parents;
 - C. scrutiny of policy documents, attendance registers, records kept of pupils, teachers' planning documents, the previous inspection report and action plan;
 - C. analysis of the school development plan and budget figures;
 - C. analysis of 63 parents' questionnaires.

DATA AND INDICATORS

Pupil data

	Number of pupils on roll (full-time equivalent)	Number of pupils with statements of SEN	Number of pupils on school's register of SEN	Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals
YR ? Y7	370	15	44	31

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers (YR ? Y7)

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent)	17
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21.8

Education support staff (YR ? Y7)

Total number of education support staff	7
Total aggregate hours worked each week	179.5

Average class size:

24.7

Financial data

Financial year:	1998/1999
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Total Income	607344
Total Expenditure	584137
Expenditure per pupil	1596
Balance brought forward from previous year	20185
Balance carried forward to next year	43392

PARENTAL SURVEY

Number of questionnaires sent out:

370

Number of questionnaires returned:

63

Responses (percentage of answers in each category):

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I feel the school encourages parents to play an active part in the life of the school	41	48	10	2	0
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	41	49	5	3	2
The school handles complaints from parents well	19	40	32	6	3
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	29	51	14	6	0
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	25	57	13	5	0
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	25	63	6	5	0
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	21	56	17	6	0
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	19	57	13	10	2
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	25	60	10	5	0
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	21	62	11	6	0
My child(ren) like(s) school	44	51	2	3	0

Percentages in parentheses refer to the year before the latest reporting year